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## Instructional Leadership Practices of K-12 School Principals Regarding Teachers of English Language Learners

Omolola Tumininu Wright Odusoga  
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# Walden University

College of Education

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Omolola Tumininu Wright Odusoga

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
and that any and all revisions required by  
the review committee have been made.

## Review Committee

Dr. Peter Kiriakidis, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Jerry Collins, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Anita Dutrow, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost  
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University  
2020

Abstract

Instructional Leadership Practices of K-12 School Principals Regarding Teachers of  
English Language Learners

by

Omolola Wright-Odusoga

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Education

Walden University

October 2020

## Abstract

The problem addressed in this project study was that K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East were inconsistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach English language learners (ELLs). The purpose of this study was to understand how K-12 school principals were implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. The research question involved instructional leadership practices K-12 school principals implement in international schools in the Middle East to support teachers who teach ELL. The conceptual framework was the instructional leadership theory of Murphey, Hallinger, Weil, and Mitman. For this basic qualitative research design, 15 K-12 school principals were purposively selected. Data were collected via interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. K-12 school principals need professional development (PD) on how to support teachers who teach ELL learners and how to focus on helping ELL learners reach their highest potential. The project is a 3-day PD for K-12 school principals, and the PD content includes strategies to help K-12 school principals with ways to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The implications for positive social change include strategies for K-12 school principals to better implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers of ELL to help students graduate from school.

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### Dedication

First and foremost, I give all the glory, to God Almighty for giving me the grace, wisdom, knowledge and understanding to complete this doctorate program.

I dedicate my project study to my wonderful children Olawale, Marian and Angel, who motivated and encouraged me throughout this doctorate program. I recall that you all kept asking the question mum, have you completed your assignments?. I want to thank you for your unwavering support, which kept me motivated and focused throughout this journey. You are all truly amazing, and you are the best cheerleaders God bless you all. Thank you also to Olawale snr, for all your support this is much appreciated God bless you.

I also dedicate this work to my brothers and sisters, especially TK and Titi who are always a phone call away whenever I need support thank you for your support, this is much appreciated. "Modupe o" I also dedicate this work with heartfelt gratitude to my beloved parents of blessed memories Ekundayo A.K.A "Big Daddy" and Kehinde A.K.A "Aunty Kenny", thank you for the values you instilled in me. Your words of encouragement to attain higher education still rings in my ear today "Eko dara pupo" and "Bàtà mi á dún ko ko kà tin ba ka we mi.

I dedicate this work to my special friends, other family members and mentors who throughout this doctorate journey, have stood by me most of the time and advised and prayed for me as needed. I genuinely appreciate you. Thanks for all the support. I wish you all the best in all our endeavours. God bless you all.

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Ní àkòkò ná, mo fi ògò fún Ọlórún Alágbára jùlò fún oore ọfẹ, ọgbón, ìmọ àti ọye tí Ẹ fún mi láti ẹ̀ ẹ̀şeyorí ètò ẹ̀kọ́ ti Dókítà Àgbà nípa tí Ẹ̀kọ́.

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## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	i
List of Tables .....	vi
Section 1: The Problem.....	1
Problem Statement .....	1
Rationale .....	2
Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level .....	2
Evidence from Professional Literature .....	2
Definitions of Key Terms .....	3
Significance of the Study .....	4
Research Question .....	5
Review of the Literature .....	5
Review of the Broader Literature .....	5
Conceptual Framework.....	5
Learning Programs for ELL Learners.....	6
Structure of K-12 Science Education for ELL Learners.....	7
Gap in Literature Regarding ELL Learners .....	7
Characteristics of ELL Learners .....	9
Educational Settings for ELL Learners.....	10
Leadership Instructional Practices of K-12 Principals to Support Teachers of ELL Learners.....	12

K-12 Principals and Training of Teachers who Teach ELL Learners .....	15
Needs of Literacy Teachers who Teach ELL Learners .....	16
Reading Interventions to Teach ELL Learners .....	18
Teachers’ Instructional Practices For Teach ELL Learners .....	20
Classification of ELL Learners .....	20
Educational Leadership Policies Regarding ELL Learners .....	22
School Principals and the Needs of ELL Learners .....	24
PD for K-12 School Principals .....	25
Implications.....	26
Summary .....	26
Section 2: The Methodology.....	30
Research Design and Approach .....	31
Description and Justification.....	31
Basic Qualitative Research Design .....	31
Justification for Research Design .....	31
Participants.....	32
Population and Sampling .....	32
Criteria for Selecting Participants .....	32
Justification of Participants .....	33
Procedure for Gaining Access to Participants .....	33
Establishing a Researcher–Participant Working Relationship .....	33

Measures for Protecting Study Participants .....	34
Data Collection .....	36
Justification for Data Collection Methods .....	36
Qualitative Data Collection Process .....	36
Systems for Keeping Track of Data.....	37
Role of the Researcher .....	37
Sufficiency of Data Collection.....	38
Data Analysis .....	38
Evidence of Quality of Data .....	39
Discrepant Cases .....	40
Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations .....	40
Assumptions.....	40
Limitations .....	40
Scope of Project Study.....	41
Delimitations .....	41
Data Analysis Results .....	42
Method for Generating, Gathering, and Coding Data.....	42
Coding Procedure.....	43
Research Question .....	43
Themes and Descriptions .....	43
Theme 1: Professional Development on How to Support Teachers who Teach ELL Learners .....	44

Theme 2: Helping ELL Learners Reach Their Highest Potential .....	51
Theme 3: Strategies that Help ELL Learners Reach Their Highest Potential .....	54
Discrepant Cases .....	56
Evidence of Quality .....	57
Discussion of the Findings in Relation to Literature Review .....	57
Project Deliverable.....	59
Summary .....	60
Section 3: The Project .....	62
Introduction.....	62
Project Purpose .....	63
Project Outcomes .....	63
Project Outline .....	64
Project Implementation .....	66
Rationale .....	66
Review of the Literature .....	67
Project Description.....	77
Project Implementation and Timetable .....	80
Activity 2: Link the theories to general learning .....	81
Roles and Responsibilities .....	82
Project Evaluation Plan.....	82
Project Implications .....	83
Direction for Future Research.....	85

Summary .....	86
Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions.....	89
Project Strengths and Limitations .....	89
Recommendations for Alternative Approaches .....	90
Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change .....	90
Reflection on Importance of the Work .....	91
Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research .....	92
Conclusion .....	93
References .....	94
Appendix A: The Project .....	
Appendix B: Interview Protocol .....	127
Appendix C: Professional Development Evaluation .....	128

List of Tables

Table 1. Themes.....

Table 2. 3-Day Schedule for Professional Development for K-12 School Principals.....

## Section 1: The Problem

The problem addressed in this project study was that K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East were perceived as inconsistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach English language learners (ELLs). According to Daneshfar and Moharami (2018), teaching ELL is challenging, and teachers who teach ELL need the support of principals. Teachers who teach ELL need support from administrators to help students increase their proficiency in literacy (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019; United States Department of Education, 2019). Baecher, Knoll, and Patti (2016) suggested that school administrators promote the effective delivery of English language instruction by supporting teachers in international schools.

### **Problem Statement**

The project site was a set of private K-12 language schools consisting of 43 schools and 86 school principals. K-12 teachers who taught ELLs reported to senior district administrators that school principals struggled to implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL. Senior district administrators collaborated with service providers to offer professional development (PD) to K-12 school principals to better implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. Although principals received PD, teachers who taught ELLs continued to mention that K-12 school principals were not consistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support them.

Baecher, Knoll, and Patti (2016) suggested that school administrators promote the effective delivery of English language instruction by supporting teachers in international schools for students to improve their proficiency in literacy. Baecher et al. (2016) stated that school administrators should be prepared to promote effective delivery of English language instruction

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by providing programs and activities to teachers of ELL to support the learners. Cassady et al. (2018) indicated that K-12 principals should support teachers teaching ELL learners for the benefit of students. The problem addressed in this project study was that K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East were perceived as inconsistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL.

### **Rationale**

#### **Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level**

K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East were struggling to support teachers who teach ELL. Senior district administrators from this group of schools in the Middle East received complains regarding the instructional leadership practices of principals to support teachers who teach ELLs. K-12 school principals reported to district administrators that they struggled to support teachers of ELL learners. Senior school district administrators decided to support the instructional leadership capacity of K-12 school principals by visiting the school sites on a monthly basis to help these principals better apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers of ELL learners. The school district senior administrators focused on K-12 school principals' instructional leadership practices to support teachers teaching ELL learners. Although senior district administrators provided feedback to K-12 school principals, district directors reported to the Education department that principals continued to struggle to support teachers teaching ELL learners.

#### **Evidence from Professional Literature**

Teachers who are teaching ELL learners need the support of school principals. K-12 school principals should apply instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers teaching ELL learners. Baecher et al. (2016) indicated that K-12 principals need to support ELL

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learners to learn English. Artiglieri (2019) stated that scholars need to examine instructional leadership practices of administrators to support teachers of ELL learners for learners to improve their proficiency in literacy; specifically, Artiglieri (2019) stated that school principals should have the appropriate instructional leadership knowledge to support teachers to meet the needs of ELL learners because English is their second language

Many K-12 public schools in the United States, Canada, and Australia have a number of students whose first language is not English (Dobinson & Buchori, 2016). New York City has the highest number of ELLs in the United States (Kieffer, 2016). Language learning should be inclusive of ELL learners (Lee et al., 2018). Artiglieri (2019) said that there is the number of ELL in K-12 schools across the United States is increasing. Some ELL learners are long-term English language learners (LTELL) and English as a new language (ENL) students. Artiglieri (2019) also reported that New York, California, Arizona, and Texas have the largest populations of LTELL. Thompson (2016) reported that if ELL learners are not helped during early education, it will take them more academic years to graduate.

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

*Bilingual learners:* Bilingual learners are a group of students who speak and use two or more languages as a means of communicating (Artiglieri, 2019).

*English language learners (ELLs):* ELLs are defined as students whose communication in English is not fluent. ELLs come from diverse backgrounds, and when they are in educational establishments, teaching and learning instructions need to be adjusted to their language needs (Baecher et al., 2016).

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*English as a second language (ESL)*: ESL is a term used to describe students whose mother tongue is not English. ESL students are referred to as multilingual learners (Nordquist, 2020).

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because the findings have significance for K-12 school principals. The project is a 3-day PD for K-12 school principals, and the PD content includes strategies to help K-12 school principals with ways to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The findings help educators, policymakers, and school administrators understand instructional leadership practices of school principals regarding teachers who teach ELL. The findings help K-12 principals better implement their instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL. The findings inform senior district administrators to support school principals regarding instructional leadership practices.

Findings from this study will help scholars conduct varied research on the subject of instructional leadership practices of K-12 principals within the Middle East regarding supporting teachers who teach ELL learners for the benefit of learners. Parents of ELL in the international language schools benefit from findings by understanding their societal roles such as supporting ELL learners to increase their proficiency in literacy. The findings will benefit PD professionals to support K-12 principals to improve their instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers of ELL learners. Positive social change will result from the implementation of a 3-day PD training for K-12 school principals at the project site to better implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers and help ELL learners pass state exams in literacy and graduate from school.

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### **Research Question**

The research question that guided this project study was:

What instructional leadership practices are K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East, implementing to support teachers who teach ELL?

### **Review of the Literature**

I searched for peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2015 and 2020 regarding K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East and their instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. I found over 1,000 peer-reviewed journal articles that were relevant to the research question under study and current. Specifically, I used Walden University's Library databases such as ERIC, Google Scholar, ProQuest, and SAGE Journals Online. The search keywords were: *instructional leadership practices, K-12 school principals, literacy teachers, supporting literacy teachers, ELL learners, needs of ELL learners, needs of school principals, international schools in the Middle East, instructional leadership practices of school principals, instructional leadership practices of international school principals, support for teachers who teach ELL and theories on teaching, and instructional leadership practices*. In this literature review, I present sections on instructional leadership practices of K-12 principals, support for literacy teachers, ELL learners, and theories on instruction.

### **Review of the Broader Literature**

#### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework was the instructional leadership theory of Murphey, Hallinger, Weil, and Mitman. The components of instructional leadership are: (a) functions performed by the principal, (b) kinds of activities performed by the principal, and (c) procedures and practices

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of the school organization. I used this conceptual framework to understand how principals apply their instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach literacy to ELLs. School principals have various interactions with literacy teachers, and such interactions are based on yearly teachers' observations, activities that include monthly communications with teachers about data collection, monitoring students' performances, gaps in learning, and adhering to district policy procedures of the school.

Vygotsky (1986) stated that the sociocultural theory is about the relationship between humans' cognitive development and language learning. I used this conceptual framework to examine the instructional leadership practices of K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East regarding support for teachers who teach ELL. In terms of operationalizing the subject under study, this conceptual framework was used to prepare the interview questions in seeking answers to the research question. Specifically, I used this theory to formulate the interview questions (see Appendix B). I used the basic qualitative research design in this project study. I used the instructional leadership theory to examine the views of participants in supporting literacy teachers of ELL learners. In this project study, the conceptual framework was used to examine the instructional leadership practices of K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East regarding support for teachers who teach ELL.

### **Learning Programs for ELL Learners**

Learning programs have been created to support ELL learners. Miller (2018) stated that the leaders of learning programs need to use strategies. Leaders of learning programs have responsibilities such as defining clear learning and teaching goals. The leaders of learning programs should help teachers increase their knowledge of the acquisition of a second language and of how to immerse them in teaching and learning when working with ELL learners

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(Hadjioannou et al., 2016). Leaders of learning programs should also prepare their programs to meet the needs of ELL learners because the number of learners whose first language is not English and who have challenges in their academic attainment is growing (Dobinson & Buchori, 2016). ELL learners lack proficiency in literacy and need support in K-12 schools.

Whitacre (2015) reported that K-12 administrators demonstrated instructional leadership practices on the theoretical ideology of dual-language programs for ELL. Whitacre (2015) highlighted that the provision of bilingual education in Texas schools helped ELL learners acquire the English language. Whitacre (2015) indicated that bilingual children would need more than 3 years of the bilingual immersion program to fully acquire the English language. Whitacre (2015) concluded that even though some school districts changed their administrators, the new and existing principals in the district were not in favour of one dual-language model for implementation and delivery of bilingual education.

### **Structure of K-12 Science Education for ELL Learners**

ELL learners need to increase their proficiency in literacy to pass state tests in literacy. Based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), there is a shift in language instruction and contemporary thinking in terms of how ELL learners acquire and apply their second language skills when learning science. NGSS provides instructional literacy materials to help learners develop language skills in elementary schools. The instructional needs of ELL learners need to be taken into consideration not only in the English language classroom but also during the formation of science standards.

### **Gap in Literature Regarding ELL Learners**

Teachers of ELL learners need to know what strategies to use to teach these learners. School principals also need to know how to apply instructional leadership practices to support

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literacy teachers and ELL learners. K-12 school principals and teachers in diverse K-12 schools should be aware that ELL learners have different learning challenges. For example, K-12 school principals need to know about language acquisition and literacy. Ovando and Combs (2019) said that ELL learners should be given opportunities to increase proficiency in English. Baecher et al. (2016) indicated that K-12 principals need to support ELL students.

K-12 principals need to support ELL learners to acquire and apply their second languages skills when learning English because they need to pass state tests in literacy (Lee et al., 2018). The instructional needs of ELL learners should be taken into consideration by school administrators because English is their second or even third language (Baecher et al., 2016). K-12 school principals should be aware of the different instructional and academic abilities of ELL learners (Ovando & Combs, 2019). School principals need to ensure that their instructional leadership practices are effective for ELL learners (Ovando & Combs, 2019). According to Baecher et al. (2016), K-12 school principals should apply effective instructional leadership practices for the delivery of English language instruction to ELL learners within the school community. Language programs and school activities should be designed to support the learning of ELL learners inside and outside the classroom (Baecher et al., 2016).

K-12 school principals need to support teachers of ELL learners. Baecher et al. (2016) emphasized that K-12 school principals should support teachers of ELL learners. School principals need to provide effective instructional leadership practices to ensure that ELL programs in international schools are helping ELL learners (Baecher et al., 2016). Effective instructional leadership practices benefit a diverse school community (Ovando & Combs, 2019).

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## **Characteristics of ELL Learners**

According to Kibler (2016), categorizing learners can be useful for research and teaching purposes. However, the learner categories of ELL learners, bilingual learners, and ESL learners can be elusive, which can confuse and challenge educators who work with and teach ELL learners. ELL learners in K-12 schools have unique learning needs. Boyle et al. (2018) examined the diverse ELL population in schools by conducting qualitative interviews regarding administrators' knowledge and skills to meet the needs of ELL. Boyle et al. (2018) indicated that ELL learners have unique learning needs. K-12 school principals should identify the needs of ELL learners and apply their instructional leadership practices to support these learners (Boyle et al., 2018).

Cassady et al. (2018) examined how K-12 principals support teachers of ELL learners. Cassady et al. (2018) reported that ELL learners are a diverse group of learners with home languages different from the language of instruction in the classroom. Because ELL learners have unique learning needs, Cassady et al. (2018) stated that there are barriers to the delivery of ELL instruction and indicated that K-12 principals need to support both the development of literacy within schools and teachers teaching ELL learners.

Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) said that school language policies are changing to reflect and embrace multilingualism as well as ensure that the needs of these multilingual students are met. According to Johnson (2020), there continues to be a growing gap in the academic attainment of ELL learners compared to first language English students. Johnson (2020) indicated that 67% of ELL learners graduated from high school compared to the national average, which is 84%. Johnson (2020) said that even though 81% of native English speakers attend college, only 62% of ELL learners attend college, and of that, 62% complete a 2-year

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college program. Johnson (2020) concluded that ELL learners are affected by their status when it comes to student achievement. Johnson (2020) examined the reclassification of ELL learners, especially students in the 8th grade and how the reclassification of the ELL learners affects them. When students reach the 8th grade, ELL learners may choose their subject of study in preparation for college or vocational qualification; however, the way in which these learners are classified at this stage impacts the subjects available to them to take in preparation for college admission (Johnson, 2020).

### **Educational Settings for ELL Learners**

The educational setting affects the learning of ELL learners. The school community impacts ELL learners (Erikson et al., 2014). The needs of ELL learners should be given careful consideration by supporting school officials and teachers (Erikson et al., 2014). Erikson et al. (2014) conducted qualitative interviews to examine the educational setting of ELL programs by K-12 principals and indicated that K-12 principals should provide support to teachers regarding the delivery of ELL education programs. Erikson et al. (2014) stated that teachers who teach ELL learners need to create appropriate settings for these learners.

Literacy teachers could group ELL learners in the classroom. Umansky (2016) reported that grouping students into the ELL category as early as Kindergarten sometimes leads to these children being in ELL programs throughout their schooling years. Umansky (2016). According to Umansky (2016), by the time ELL learners are in secondary school, they are often still in ELL programs, that are sometimes seen as unfavourable. Umansky (2018) reported that the ELL grouping impacts ELL learners in the learning environment and that the learners who are labelled as ELL learners are subjected to a specific type of treatment (for example, having limited access to services), which could be intentional or unintentional.

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Leadership Instructional practices affect ELL learners. Communication is an important instructional practice in order for ELL learners to acquire language skills (Garrity et al., 2018). ELL learners need to develop communication skills (Garrity et al., 2018). Garrity et al. (2018) examined the methods of English language instructional practices for ELL learners in K-12 schools. Garrity et al. (2018) concluded that school officials need to promote the speaking of more than one language for ELL learners in order to improve and encourage linguistic diversity.

The number of ELL students in schools continues to increase. Mady and Masson (2018) studied K-12 school principals' understanding of the inclusion of ELL learners in a French language immersion program. Mady and Masson (2018) gathered data from K-12 principals and parents about enrolling ELL learners in a French immersion program. Specifically, Mady and Masson (2018) examined the K-12 principals' instructional strategies when including ELL learners in a French immersion program, as well as their understanding of how to include ELL learners in the French immersion program. Mady and Masson (2018) indicated that K-12 principals had positive attitudes about including ELL learners in the French immersion program in their school.

Menken and Solorza (2015) indicated that principals' instructional leadership practices need to fully embrace the delivery of bilingual learning programs. Principals have a limited understanding of bilingualism and linguistic diversity in bilingual education (Menken & Solorza, 2015). Nguyen and Nguyen (2017) collected data from Vietnamese international schools and focused on language leadership instructional practices of K-12 principals. Nguyen and Nguyen (2017) examined the acquisition of the English language in Grades 8 and 9 of ELL learners attending international schools in Vietnam. Nguyen and Nguyen (2017) indicated that language leadership instructional practices of K-12 principals are associated with the acquisition of the

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English language of ELL learners. K-12 principals need to link their interactive and communicative skills to the learning of ELL learners. Nguyen and Nguyen (2017) concluded that K-12 principals play critical roles in the acquisition of the English language and the shaping of language beliefs by ELL learners.

K-12 school principals need to apply their instructional leadership practices for the delivery of bilingual and second language programs in schools. Yolanda and Waxman (2016) conducted a qualitative interview with 22 K-12 school principals about instructional leadership practices for the delivery of bilingual and second language programs in schools. The interview questions focused on the strengths and challenges that come with the delivery of ELL programs. Yolanda and Waxman (2016) highlighted that K-12 principals do not have adequate expertise in instructional leadership practices to implement and deliver ELL programs in their schools effectively.

### **Leadership Instructional Practices of K-12 Principals to Support Teachers of ELL Learners**

K-12 principals should support teachers who teach ELL learners. Rowland (2017) examined the support available to teachers from principals to raise the academic achievements of ELL learners. Rowland (2017) stated that K-12 principals should implement a system that provides for collaboration, planning, and instruction as well as using skills and knowledge relevant to the delivery of ELL programs. Rowland (2017) stated that principals should demonstrate instructional leadership practices. Instructional leaders should create a school community with a shared expectation of learning and a shared characteristic of trust (Rowland, 2017).

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Principals should apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers who are teaching ELL learners. Téllez and Manthey (2015) conducted a mixed-methods research with a sample of 578 California teachers. Téllez and Manthey (2015) collected data from K-12 principals to examine teachers' confidence in teaching ELL learners. Téllez and Manthey (2015) concluded that principals should apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers teaching ELL learners.

School leaders experience challenges when it comes to implementing educational practices linked to inclusive teaching and learning. Howley et al. (2018) acknowledged that principals tend to follow conventional wisdom when promoting inclusion in school settings to implement inclusion and equality for ELL learners. Howley et al. (2018) linked instructional leadership to social justice within the educational profession, whereby principals are concerned about the marginalization and inclusion of students who come from ethnic minorities and have disabilities. Howley et al. (2018) also acknowledged that there are no specific strategies to determine what leadership should look like and, as such, principal leadership qualities are seen as a value-added achievement.

Primary school principals' practices concerning teaching and learning can promote a positive culture in the school system. According to Howley et al. (2018), principals' instructional practices should be a functional process that helps educators shape teaching and learning to produce equitable and improved learning outcomes for students and stakeholders. Howley et al. (2018) stated that a principal's instructional leadership has a direct impact on a student's achievement level. Howley et al. (2018) acknowledged that principals' instructional leadership practices impact students' learning and shape the culture of how and why teachers teach, which also leads to promoting social justice and inclusive instructional leadership for ELL learners.

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According to Felice and Von Esch (2016), successful leaders of K-12 schools with high numbers of ELL learners are able to implement effective instructional leadership within the schools because they have prior experience as classroom teachers of ELL learners as well as extensive professional development, instructional coaching, and experiences in guided language acquisition design, all of which were implemented in these schools to help to meet the instructional needs of ELL learners. Harris et al. (2017) reported that school principals make an essential contribution to school improvement practices and procedures that, in turn, contribute to positive learning outcomes for students. Harris et al. (2017) noted that school leaders need to have general knowledge related to educational leadership, which may be one of the most powerful skills required for international leadership in K-12 schools.

Heineke et al. (2018) reported that there is a need for school leaders to have a sound understanding of the linguistically responsive practice and to provide support for teachers within the school community. According to Harris et al. (2017), there needs to be a positive instructional leadership in schools to ensure the quality of schools where students are given learning opportunities. Harris et al. (2017) stated that instructional leadership practices could impact students' learning outcomes. Harris et al. (2017) added that the understanding of instructional leadership is still developing in different countries, especially in developing countries where there is little or no literature on leadership and leadership practices or, in some cases, such literature is still in its developing stage. In Asia, information on instructional leadership is underdeveloped, and there is a need and urgency to study and research instructional leadership practices in Asian societies (Harris et al., 2017). Harris et al. (2017) reported that international knowledge in principals' instructional leadership in Malaysia is still a work in progress because the literature on educational leadership practices in Malaysia dates back several

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decades. The Malaysian Ministry of Education reported that there is a clear policy about the Malaysian government's intentions to make a significant improvement in the country's education system (Harris et al., 2017). For example, one of the main points of the Malaysian government is to ensure that Malaysia has high-performing leaders, assistant principals, subject heads, department heads, and instructional leaders in every school in Malaysia (Harris et al., 2017). These group of leaders are expected to have the competency, knowledge, and expertise to make decisions within their job roles that will have a positive outcome on the school curriculum (Harris et al., 2017).

### **K-12 Principals and Training of Teachers who Teach ELL Learners**

Teachers who teach ELL learners need training. Téllez and Manthey (2015) stated that principals should provide training opportunities for teachers who are teaching ELL learners. Téllez and Manthey (2015) reported that teachers are not confident at delivering bilingual education program to ELL learners due to lack of adequate training. Whitacre (2015) examined the delivery of bilingual education and interviewed K-12 principals who used the dual education instructional strategy in schools in Texas.

ELL learners are increasingly finding themselves needing to read a foreign language, and developing the ability to do so is a challenge. This often leads to the stereotype that ELL learners are weak when it comes to reading English (Evans et al., 2019). Thus, teachers who teach ELL learners need training on how to identify the weaknesses in ELL learners' reading using different programs. For example, teachers should be trained on how to use the reading recovery program (Evans et al., 2019). Some school districts in the United States require teachers to receive training and endorsement on teaching English to the speakers of other languages (Felice & Von Esch, 2016). Felice and Von Esch (2016) suggested that principals and administrators must have

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a strategy to create opportunities to meet the instructional needs of ELL learners in their school community.

Heineke et al. (2018) acknowledged that thorough knowledge of instructional leadership practices in K-12 schools enables administrators to facilitate quality instructional experiences for learners and that the leaders must have a solid pedagogical understanding of teaching and learning instructions. Heineke et al. (2018) acknowledged that stakeholders such as school and district administrators in a linguistically diverse K-12 school community tend to value the expertise of ELL educators within that school community and that this would form a good foundation for enriching and improving the learning outcomes for ELL learners. K-12 school principals and district administrators need to be more involved in the delivery of diverse education within their school communities (Heineke et al., 2018). Teachers who teach ELL learners need professional development (PD) to know how to meet the needs of these learners. PD is needed for teachers regarding the selection of appropriate teaching and learning instruction links to the theory of bilingual education (Heineke et al., 2018). K-12 school principals should provide PD to teachers to improve their teaching practices.

### **Needs of Literacy Teachers who Teach ELL Learners**

Literacy teachers who teach ELL learners need to know how to teach these learners. Hadjioannou (2016) acknowledged that teachers must have sound knowledge of teaching an ELL curriculum to students. According to Hadjioannou (2016), there is not a specific or singular instructional strategy or method proven to be useful for teaching ELL learners because these learners come from diverse backgrounds that can poses several challenges in ELL and ESL student's learning environments.

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Literacy teachers who teach ELL learners need to know how to plan and manage instruction for ELL learners. Hadjioannou (2016) reported that teachers who teach ELL learners place these learners in reading support groups based on the learners' skills, abilities, and knowledge of reading. Hadjioannou (2016) suggested that teachers need to know how to best group ELL learners who are learning to read and who are acquiring a second language. Hadjioannou (2016) indicated that state test scores are indicative of a mainstream classroom that is unprepared to work with culturally and linguistically diverse learners such as ELL learners.

Teachers who are teaching in a mainstream classroom felt that they are unprepared and incompetent to help bridge the gap in the learning of ELL learners to be able to facilitate their academic progress (Hadjioannou, 2016). Evans et al. (2019) stated that school routines affect the experiences and learning outcomes for ELL learners who are of diverse cultural backgrounds. Evans et al. (2019) argued that teachers who are using the normal literacy assessment strategy are not helping ELL learners who are emergent bilingual learners. Teachers who teach ELL learners are using English mainstream assessment strategies to evaluate diverse students.

Evans et al. (2019) examined the practices of educational leaders in a K-12 school to determine how they implemented literacy assessment from a bilingual learner's perspective as well as the actions taken by these leaders to address literacy assessment routines and inequalities around assessments in a bilingual K-12 school. Evans et al. (2019) concluded that K-12 school principals need to support teachers to promote a more culturally responsive instructional practice in a diverse school community. Teachers of ELL learners should aim to create equity for bilingual learners as well as incorporate culture and language as an essential aspect of learning (Evans et al., 2019).

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Evans et al. (2019) argued that the process of assessing student's educational progress in K-12 schools is a normal phenomenon; however, K-12 principals and teachers of ELL learners should have adequate knowledge and understanding of basic literacy assessment strategies. According to Evans et al. (2019), literacy assessments need to be used accurately for the assessments of ELL learners. Evans et al. (2019) concluded that ELL readers use language and thoughts in their reading skills to help them make meaningful sense of texts given to them.

Regular literacy assessment strategies shall not be used to evaluate ELL learners. Literacy teachers need to understand the social-cultural context in which ELL readers approach written text (Evans et al., 2019). Evans et al. (2019) acknowledged that when teachers assess monolingual English speakers with ELL learners, the appropriate measures should be used to identify where ELL learners fall behind. Evans et al. (2019) acknowledged that K-12 school leaders must shift their focus to ensure that teachers are meeting the needs of every student in their educational practices. For bilingual learners, the educational practices should take into account daily instructional ideologies as well as institutional and other barriers that could lead to inequalities for ELL learners (Evans et al., 2019).

Literacy teachers should use reading diagnostic tests aimed at measuring ELL learners' reading strengths and weaknesses (Alderson et al., 2016). According to Umansky (2016), students are placed in separately tiered classes or instructional groups to track their progress. Umansky (2016) acknowledged that scholarly reviews and discussion tracking have a disproportionate effect in African American, Latinos, and poor students.

### **Reading Interventions to Teach ELL Learners**

Literacy teachers should use reading interventions to help ELL learners. According to Scammacca et al. (2016), who conducted a systematic review of research on reading

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interventions available to ELL learners, suggested that literacy teachers should implement effective interventions for students who struggle in reading especially for students from Grades 4 to 12. Scammacca et al. (2016) studied students from Grades 4 to 12 with low reading ability because these are the students who are mostly classified into the reading intervention group. Scammacca et al. (2016) reported that interventions such as teaching cognitive strategies to struggling readers would be beneficial to them. For example, using reading comprehension intervention that uses self-questioning and self-monitoring skills (Scammacca et al., 2016).

Munguia (2017) reported that ELL learners comprise of 30% of the United States student population. Munguia (2017) stated that ELL learners are new to the United States. Literacy teachers should use reading comprehension interventions to help ELL learners. Ritchey et al. (2017) examined the reading comprehension interventions for students in the fifth grade for students with very low comprehension skills in K to 5 elementary schools in the United States. Ritchey et al. (2017) discovered that 32.7% of the students attending the school have limited English proficiency. Ritchey et al. (2017) stated that teachers should use research-based comprehensive reading and language arts curriculum. Supplemental reading interventions for ELL learners with low reading comprehension should be used by teachers (Ritchey et al., 2017). For example, students with low reading and comprehension skills are placed in an intervention group where they receive instructions up to 150 minutes per week using the Voyager Expanded Learning Program (Ritchey et al., 2017). Another example is for students to receive 180 to 200 minutes per week of reading intervention using the Corrective Reading Program (Ritchey et al., 2017).

According to Vaughn et al. (2019), there are different listening comprehension and reading skills program that can be used for ELL learners. Vaughn et al. (2019) suggested that any

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reading interventions and remedial programs for student in third grade and above has less effect on the students in the intervention group. Vaughn et al. (2019) acknowledged that having reading intervention for students have less impact in their reading abilities. ELL learners should be given the opportunity to learn skills such as vocabulary and syntax (Vaughn et al., 2019). Vaughn et al. (2019) acknowledged that linguistic comprehension is part of lexical information related to meaning and syntax. Vaughn et al. (2019) stated that ELL learners need to develop linguistic comprehension skills. Clemens et al. (2019) said that teachers need to help language learners with decoding, reading, fluency, and vocabulary without hindering students' abilities to develop higher-order reading abilities.

### **Teachers' Instructional Practices For Teach ELL Learners**

The increase in diversity in K-12 schools places pressure on teachers to meet the English language needs of students. Teachers of K-12 schools should ensure that they provide adequate and effective instructional practices for ELL learners (Felice & Von Esch, 2016). Felice and Von Esch (2016) stated that K-12 teachers are not entirely sure of how to teach and respond to the linguistic needs of ELL learners in K-12 schools. For example, teachers could be unaware of the knowledge and skills required to teach ELL learners. Instructional leaders should help teachers to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to teach ELL learners (Felice & Von Esch, 2016).

### **Classification of ELL Learners**

According to Reyes and Hwang (2019), the reclassification of the ELL learners as they transition from middle school to high school is not been taken into consideration as course credits, and as a result, ELL learners need to complete extra credits towards their graduation from high school. Reyes and Hwang (2019) stated that having an ELL status is not necessarily an indicator of how proficient a student is in English language. The ELL status is a category and a

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term used by education agencies to categorize ELL learners who speak another language other than English at home (Reyes & Hwang, 2019).

Johnson (2020) argued that there are other factors that influence the reclassification of ELL learners, such as the interpretation of government policies. State tests scores is another way of reclassification for ELL learners based on school district recommendations (Johnson, 2020). Johnson (2020) acknowledged that in order for ELL learners to be successful in school, they need to be exposed to instructional language teaching to meet their learning needs. Schools are tasked with providing ELL learners with access to academic instructions at their age according to school curriculum (Johnson, 2020).

If K-12 schools principals withhold the classification and opportunities from ELL learners, principals' decisions may prove to have ELL learners permanently placed in ELL categories for a long time (Johnson, 2020). The aforementioned principals' decisions may prevent ELL learners from being placed in the correct group for their study in middle and high school (Estrada et al., 2018). Some school districts set out reclassification criteria and questions that school principals need to take into consideration for students' reclassification (Estrada et al., 2018). For example, the percentage of students who meet the English language district reclassification criteria, after their reclassification (Johnson, 2020).

Shin (2018) examined the classification of ELL learners by different school districts and stated that each state and school district have different criteria for identifying and classifying ELL learners. For example, in California, students who indicate that speak another language other than English at home are required to take an English proficiency test known as the California English language development test (CELDT). Students who indicate that their home

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language is English are generally excluded from this test and are classified as English only (Shin, 2018).

Based on the classifications of ELL learners and English only learners, students are eligible to register in English language support programs, if they are labelled as ELL learners (Shin, 2018). English language support programs are either an English language immersion program or an academic learning program after school. Kibler et al. (2019) conducted a research on the classification of ELL learners in a county school district where the school has policies on how ELL learners are classified based on their different English proficiency level. Kibler et al. (2019) found that ELL learners are classified based on the student population that made up the disadvantaged and racial-ethnic backgrounds.

### **Educational Leadership Policies Regarding ELL Learners**

Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) referred to the knowledge of school leaders and staff who were transforming language policies and practices in their schools as well as their admissions practices regarding emergent bilingual learners. Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) examined the policies and paradigm shift relating to multilingualism practices in schools. Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) reported that the implementation of language education policies in K-12 schools had moved away from being the responsibility of the government to being the responsibility of school principals, teachers, and students.

Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) suggested that there is not enough evidence to support the role of school leadership in developing language policy in schools. Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) examined the paradigm shift of leadership policies relating to language education as well as policies and practices relating to language education for students who are transitioning from monolingualism to multilingualism. Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) stated that school principals

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play an essential role in implementing language policies and practices within a school community. School leaders come from either supervisory or management positions and that the leadership category includes assistant principals and other administrators (Ascenzi-Moreno et al., 2016). The development and implementation of school-based language policy is the collective responsibility of school leaders (Ascenzi-Moreno et al., 2016).

Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) suggested that school principals should support the needs of emerging bilingual learners in a monolingual school community. Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) examined the different interpretations of federal, state, and local educational policies by principals in their school district in the city of Philadelphia. Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) found that administrators support bilingual education, and they believed that the educational policies at the federal, state and local levels supported bilingual education. Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) stated that more research is needed to examine the implementation of multilingual policies in the school community around the world primarily considered principals' implementation of language policies. Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) stated that teachers act on policies, and bilingual teachers often recreate and reinterpret language educational policies within their classrooms.

Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) reported that educators in Nepal were able to develop the skills to implement multilingual educational programs by attending workshops where the focus was on teachers and not school leaders. Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) stated that in Mexico government policy allows school leaders to deliver instructions in indigenous languages and Spanish. Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) reported that school principals should provide linguistic resources to teachers and promote bilingual education for ELL learners by sharing instructional leadership expertise with staff members and promoting distributive leadership. Ascenzi-Moreno

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et al. (2016) further added that school principals should have specialized knowledge to deliver instructional leadership in a multilingual K-12 school setting.

School principals should work closely with emergent bilingual students to recognize and follow up on the different inequalities and challenges that emergent bilingual students experience within the school community (Ascenzi-Moreno et al., 2016). School principals are charismatic people who can fix school problems using their skills, knowledge, and expertise (Ascenzi-Moreno et al., 2016). Ascenzi-Moreno et al. (2016) acknowledged that K-12 school principals face great social, political, and economic injustices that could affect the school and that these are factors that principals cannot control.

### **School Principals and the Needs of ELL Learners**

ELL learners need support from school principals. There is a growing need for principals to focus on and support the needs of language learners in all subject areas, not only in reading text, but also in listening, speaking, and writing, because language development acquisition and understanding is required in all subject areas, this academic language must be used in every lesson, not just in English lessons (Heineke et al., 2018). School principals need to recruit teachers who understand the importance of language development and its role in the effective delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of ELL learners. Heineke et al. (2018) reported that teachers need to have the expertise to teach ELL learners in linguistically diverse communities. School principals need to ensure that they are valuing language and supporting the diverse culture within the school community (Heineke et al., 2018). Heineke et al. (2018) reported that K-12 school principals must ensure the implementation of a holistic approach when creating a linguistically responsive practice for ELL learners within the school community. For this to be effective within a school, principals must have leadership knowledge of ELL programs and

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strategies that allow for flexibility within the school as well as giving ELL learners opportunities to understand the language development program offered at the school for ELL learners and how it is aligned with the school curriculum and practices (Heineke et al., 2018).

### **PD for K-12 School Principals**

School principals need to develop an understanding of cognitive coaching to help in the development of literacy standards in K-12 schools. PD would help principals to meet the needs of 21st-century teaching and pedagogical approach for instructional leadership practices and to improve the quality of education (Lee et al., 2019). K-12 school principals need to have training on instructional supervision of a school. PD for K-12 school principals should focus on different observational skills, such as conducting observation and holding post-observation conferences (Baecher et al., 2016). Baecher et al. (2016) suggested that observational strategies could help aspiring instructional leaders to gain expertise on how to identify an area of instruction that teachers would need to improve on as well as help them to reflect on and plan their teaching and make improvements. Baecher et al. (2016) stated that when principals have the knowledge and understanding of observation-based practices for a particular group of teachers such as ELL teachers, they will be able to improve and enrich the instructional practice for ELL teachers.

K-12 principals in bilingual schools find their roles challenging in the sense that they are not prepared for the instructional leadership practices required of them for the position. Black et al. (2018) suggested that K-12 principals must be able to handle the requirements of teachers, parents, and the school community in providing quality teaching and learning instruction in K-12 schools. Black et al. (2018) stated that The Educational Leadership Professional Learning Alliance (ELPLA) is an example for K-12 principals to share their concerns about delivering effective teaching and learning instruction in their schools. Esch (2018) reported that

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instructional leaders have an essential role in improving the educational opportunities offered to ELL learners in K-12 schools and need PD. K-12 principals must acknowledge ELL learners in order to provide them with an equitable learning environment and opportunity in mainstream classrooms (Esch, 2018).

### **Implications**

The findings help K-12 principals with strategies to better implement their instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The findings are PD needs of K-12 school principals to support teachers who teach ELL learners. I developed the 3-day PD plan containing strategies for K-12 school principals to use in order to assist them to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The content of the 3-day PD includes instructional leadership strategies towards the support for teachers who teach ELL learners. Appendix A includes the PD content that I developed for this project study. The findings of this project study help K-12 school principals with strategies to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The findings also help school principals and senior school district administrators with information to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The implications for positive social change include strategies for K-12 school principals to apply in order to better implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers of ELL to help students pass state exams and graduate from school.

### **Summary**

The problem addressed in this project study was that K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East were perceived as inconsistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who taught English language learners. The purpose of this project study was to understand how K-12 school principals were implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who taught ELL learners. The research

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question was about the instructional leadership practices K-12 school principals implemented in international schools in the Middle East to support teachers who teach ELL learners.

A basic qualitative research design was used. The conceptual framework was the instructional leadership theory of Murphey, Hallinger, Weil, and Mitman and the components are: (a) functions engaged by the principal, (b) the kinds of activities performed by the principal, and (c) procedures and practices of the school organization. The participants were K-12 school principals, who were purposively selected.

Data were collected via interviews. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis for emergent themes. The findings are strategies that are included on a 3-day PD plan for K-12 school principals to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The PD content is designed for K-12 school principals to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The implications for positive social change include strategies for K-12 school principals to use to better implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers of ELL to help students pass state exams and graduate from school.

The literature review revealed a gap in practice with regards to the instructional leadership practices of K-12 school principals. In addition, there was only minimal literature available about instructional leadership practices in K-12 international schools in the Middle East. K-12 school principals and teachers in diverse K-12 schools should be aware that ELL learners have different learning challenges. Baecher et al. (2016) indicated that K-12 principals need to support ELL students. Daniel et al. (2018) indicated that K-12 principals need to focus on motivating their diverse school community. Dodman (2016) highlighted the importance of K-12 principals focusing on multilingualism for ELL learners to learn English to address their unique learning needs.

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K-12 school principals need to apply their instructional leadership practices for the delivery of bilingual and second language programs in schools. Yolanda and Waxman (2016) highlighted that K-12 principals do not have adequate expertise in instructional leadership practices to implement and deliver ELL programs in their schools effectively. Rowland (2017) stated that K-12 principals should implement a system that provides for collaboration, planning, and instruction as well as using skills and knowledge relevant to the delivery of ELL programs. Howley et al. (2018) acknowledged that principals tend to follow conventional wisdom when promoting inclusion in school settings to implement inclusion and equality for ELL learners. Howley et al. (2018) stated that a principal's instructional leadership has a direct impact on a student's achievement level. Harris et al. (2017) reported that school principals make an essential contribution to school improvement practices and procedures that, in turn, contribute to positive learning outcomes for students. Heineke et al. (2018) reported that there is a need for school leaders to have a sound understanding of the linguistically responsive practice and to provide support for teachers within the school community. According to Harris et al. (2017), there needs to be a positive instructional leadership in schools to ensure the quality of schools where students are given learning opportunities.

School principals should work closely with emergent bilingual students to recognize and follow up on the different inequalities and challenges that emergent bilingual students experience within the school community (Ascenzi-Moreno et al., 2016). School principals need to recruit teachers who understand the importance of language development and its role in the effective delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of ELL learners. PD for K-12 school principals should focus on different observational skills, such as conducting observation and holding post-observation conferences (Baecher et al., 2016).

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Section 2 includes a description of the methodology for this project study, including data collection and analysis. In Section 3, a description of the project for this study, including data findings, is presented. Section 4 includes reflections as a learner during this project study as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the project as it addresses the problem and the implications for future research opportunities.

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## Section 2: The Methodology

The literature review included research on instructional leadership, instructional leadership practices, ELL learners, and literacy teachers who teach ELL learners. Peer-reviewed journal articles were searched regarding K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East and their instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. K-12 school principals should apply instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers teaching ELL learners. Baecher et al. (2016) indicated that K-12 principals need to support ELL learners. Artigliere (2019) stated that scholars need to examine the instructional leadership practices of administrators to support teachers of ELLs. School principals should have the appropriate instructional leadership knowledge to support teachers in order to meet the needs of ELL learners in the school setting. Many schools have a growing number of students whose first language is not English. Limited English proficiency has been a challenge for ELL learners when trying to achieve academic standards set by states (Borrow et al., 2016). Language learning should be inclusive of ELL learners (Lee et al., 2018).

In this section, I will provide a description of the research methodology, which includes the research approach and qualitative research design. I will describe criteria for the selection of participants. This will be followed by explanations of researcher-participant relationships and the number of participants. Data collection will be discussed and justified. I describe my role as a researcher and provide characteristics of the project site and participants. Finally, I discuss the scope and limitations of the study. A basic qualitative research design was used to examine the perceptions of principals under study regarding their instructional leadership practices supporting literacy teachers teaching ELL learners.

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## **Research Design and Approach**

### **Description and Justification**

I used a basic qualitative research design. The purpose of this study was to understand how K-12 school principals were implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. The research question that guided this project study was: What instructional leadership practices are K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East implementing to support teachers who teach ELL?

### **Basic Qualitative Research Design**

A basic qualitative research design was appropriate for this project study. A basic qualitative research design was a useful tool for investigating trends and specific situations in many scientific disciplines (Yin, 2018). Research designs focus on the nature of the research problem, and the research question addressed (Yin, 2018). The focus of qualitative research involves understanding the perceptions of the people being studied (Yin, 2018).

### **Justification for Research Design**

For the purpose of this project study, a basic qualitative research design was appropriate. The more the research question depends on how and why questions, the more relevant a basic qualitative research design is. Using a basic qualitative research design, researchers can investigate a contemporary phenomenon within a real-world context (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Studying the perceptions of how K-12 school principals in private schools in the Middle East were implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs required data about specific experiences from the viewpoint of these principals. A basic qualitative research design was appropriate to understand the thoughts and feelings of K-12

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school principals. I gained an in-depth understanding of the study phenomenon by posing explanatory why, how, and what questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

I did not collect numerical data because there were no independent and dependent variables. Relationships between independent and dependent variables were not examined (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). A theory was not created. The stories of K-12 school principals were not interpreted (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017). A grounded theory was not selected for this project study. An ethnographic design was also not selected because the focus was not on an entire cultural group.

## **Participants**

### **Population and Sampling**

The setting for the project study was a set of private K-12 language schools in the Middle East. The school district had about 43,000 students, 759 teachers, 201 paraprofessionals, and 86 principals. The 43 schools served students who were ELLs. The population of K-12 school principals in the Middle East was 86. The sample required a maximum of 15 principals. Purposive sampling was used to select 15. Purposeful sampling was appropriate because the participants were intentionally selected to participate in this project study. Thus, of 86 K-12 school principals, the goal was to identify 15 participants who met the selection criteria.

### **Criteria for Selecting Participants**

The most prominent selection criterion for participants in the participants' experiences with the phenomenon under study (Moser & Korstjens, 2017). According to Sargeant (2012), the central criteria to select participants is to consider those who may inform the study's research questions. The participants for this project study were K-12 school principals from international

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schools located in the Middle East. All participants were employed by the school district for at least 2 years and were state-certified.

### **Justification of Participants**

The goal of this project study was to recruit 15 K-12 school principals to participate in this study who met the selection criteria. I invited participants who met the selection criteria. I collected qualitative data via interviews. Thus, a sample of 15 K-12 school principals was used to collect enough qualitative data to reach data saturation.

### **Procedure for Gaining Access to Participants**

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) ensures that the rights and welfare of human research subjects are protected in research studies. Before I conducted this project study, I asked for permission from the school district senior administration and Walden University's IRB to interview the participants. Upon IRB approval (#07-17-20-0670612), I generated a list of emails of potential study participants who met the selection criteria. I reached out to K-12 school principals. Through emails, I shared with potential participants the purpose and significance of the project study as well as the methodology for data collection.

### **Establishing a Researcher–Participant Working Relationship**

Building rapport with participants goes beyond protecting their identity and concealing information that would reveal their identities through disclosure and signing an informed consent form (Stewart, Gapp, & Harwood, 2017). Building rapport involves reporting participants' responses in ways that do not distort intended meanings (Stewart et al., 2017). Researcher-participant working relationships between researchers and study participants often develop during data collection. Relationships between researchers and their research subjects can be addressed through identifying appropriate participants (Moser & Korstjens, 2017). Researchers

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need to secure agreement from the participants to participate in research (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

K-12 school principals were contacted via email. In the first email, I introduced the study and included the purpose and significance of this project study and ways to protect the confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity of the participants. After the participants agreed to participate in the study, I built trust in order to establish a collaborative and professional relationship with the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). I ensured that study participants were comfortable during the interviews and were encouraged to ask questions for clarity. I made sure that the K-12 school principals felt comfortable to honestly share their perceptions regarding their instructional leadership practices in international schools in the Middle East to support teachers who taught ELL learners.

### **Measures for Protecting Study Participants**

The credibility of this project study was supported by protecting the participants' anonymity. To institute credibility with the participants, I made sure to accurately represent the participant's responses. I used member checking to minimize my personal biases as a novice researcher. The participants reviewed their responses for accuracy after the interviews were transcribed. To further establish credibility, I made every effort to accurately represent the responses of the participants.

I did not include in the interview transcripts the names of the participants. I did not include in the findings the name of the school district or the names of the participants. I used a letter followed by a number to refer to a participant. For example, I used letter P to refer to a school principal, followed by a number to indicate the participant who provided the responses to the interview questions. For instance, P1 represented the first participant. P2 represented the

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second participant and so forth. I did not share the interview transcripts with school district administrators, and I will keep all information on my personal computer. Thus, for this project study to be ethical, I prioritized the participants' rights. The participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time during the research. Participation in the study was voluntary. All interview data were treated the confidentially.

I made each participant feel comfortable during the interviews. I explained to each participant that my role was that of a researcher and that I listened to and served as the primary instrument for gathering data during each interview. I also informed each participant that I used an interview protocol (see Appendix B) during the interviews to promote consistency. I addressed each participant professionally. I was respectful to every participant and thanked them for their time, commitment, and participation in the study.

Before I sought IRB approval, I completed the training *Protecting Human Research Participants* offered by the National Institutes of Health. I emphasized to each participant that participation was voluntary. Participant protection was a priority throughout the duration of this project study. I protected the participants' right to privacy by informing each participant that the interview data that I collected are protected. The interview data were used only for the project study. I am the only one who has access to the interviews data. Thus, I did not include the identities of the participants in the findings.

Interview transcripts are stored electronically in my house in a password-protected file on my personal computer. All files containing the interview transcripts are encrypted. All data are stored securely in a secure desk located in my home office. Data will be kept secure for 5 years, per the protocol of Walden University. After 5 years, I will destroy all interview data that I collected.

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## **Data Collection**

### **Justification for Data Collection Methods**

The researchers have an essential role to play in the research process and must ensure that they understand that people's experiences make them an expert in their field, career, or as an individual (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Researchers must have a set of skills that enable them to engage with people in the data collection process (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Furthermore, the researcher will need to have a reflexive process to data collection by asking questions that will directly have an impact on their research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Another important role of the researcher is maintaining fidelity while exploring and understanding the people and community that they collaborate with during the research process (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

A basic qualitative research design was used to examine the perceptions of K-12 school principals regarding their instructional leadership practices supporting teachers of ELL learners. I did not administer surveys to collect quantitative data because I was not studying the relationship among variables. I conducted interviews with the participants in order to collect qualitative data.

### **Qualitative Data Collection Process**

For this project study, interviews were the primary means of data collection to collect qualitative data. The interviews were conducted using an interview protocol (see Appendix B). The interview protocol was used to inform the participants of the initial questions that were asked during the interviews. The interview questions were about the perceptions of K-12 school principals regarding their instructional leadership practices supporting teachers who taught ELL learners. I developed the interview protocol (see Appendix B), which contained 10 open-ended interview questions. The interview questions did not include personal or demographic information, such as gender or age.

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Due to the Coronavirus, I used Zoom to conduct some interviews as preferred by participants. The interviews occurred on a day and at a time that was agreed with each participant. I informed the participants that their names will be kept confidential in order to protect their anonymity and elicit open, meaningful, and honest responses. I also informed each participant that they could withdraw from the interview or refuse to answer questions that would make them uncomfortable at any time without repercussions. The participants had the opportunity to ask questions during the interviews. Each interview took about 60 minutes. During the interviews, I recorded and documented the interviews with the permission of each participant.

### **Systems for Keeping Track of Data**

At the end of each interview, I transcribed each interview. The name of each participant was not included in the interview transcripts. I used a letter followed by a number to refer to a specific participant. For example, P1 referred to the first K-12 school principal. Each interview transcript was treated confidentially. Thus, during this doctoral project study, the focus was on protecting the privacy and confidentiality of each participant's personal information and interview data. Each session is stored on my laptop, and copies will be kept on a jump drive. Both the laptop and jump drive are secured by password. The jump drive is stored in a locked file cabinet.

### **Role of the Researcher**

I am an educator. I have been teaching for 15 years. For the past 8 years, I am a school principal. I am a novice researcher, and my current role did not have an effect on the data collection because I do not have a supervisory role over the participants. I established a good working relationship with K-12 school principals during the interviews.

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I communicated with each participant. I was vigilant in ensuring that I did not solicit any current colleague as part of this project study. I made sure that the recruitment process met the expected ethical standards, and those recruited were versed with the subject under study. I was the only person having access to the interviews and email correspondences that are saved and secured electronically. I will delete all electronic interview transcripts after five years of the completion of the doctoral project study. I was the only person to collect and code the data from the participants. After I conducted the semi-structured face-to-face interviews, I transcribe the interview data.

### **Sufficiency of Data Collection**

I interviewed K-12 school principals in order to collect qualitative data. I used the interviews as an instrument to collect data from K-12 school principals. Interviews consisted of open-ended questions (see Appendix B). The interview questions were used to draw out personal views regarding specific topics or situations. I did not know data saturation was reached until I conducted the interviews. When the participants shared with me the same responses and no new information was gleaned from the interviews, then I knew that I have reached data saturation. After transcribing and organizing interview data, I conducted thematic analysis for emergent themes.

### **Data Analysis**

I used thematic analysis for emergent themes. After the interviews, I scheduled a follow-up meeting with the participants to review and confirm the accuracy of the interview transcripts. Once the participants acknowledged that the interview transcripts were accurate, I used axial coding to identify common words and phrases. I transcribed the interviews and saved the interview transcripts into a Microsoft Word document. The document is password protected on a

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personal computer. The interview transcripts were organized and summarized using the NVivo software program. The transcribed interviews were exported to Microsoft Excel, and coding was used to categorize the interview transcripts. The interview transcripts were categorized by similar words.

The codes were grouped to generate themes. During the coding procedure, I searched thoroughly in the transcripts to identify words or phrases that represented important themes recurring in the responses of the study participants. Specifically, I charted similar terms and phrases and used axial coding to identify subcategories that emerged from similar responses. The subcategories were constructed according to a constant comparative model. I used the continual process of analyzing information in order to bring the data to the point of saturation. I aggregated the responses using axial coding. I also examined the participants' responses in conjunction with the literature review and conceptual framework to identify repetitive phrases and words from the interviews.

I transcribed the interviews. I organized the interview transcripts, identified common quotes, and highlighted commonalities in each response to each interview question using the interview protocol (see Appendix B). I used blue colour to highlight the main keywords. All keywords that were highlighted in blue were copied into a spreadsheet to group all information. I reviewed the content of the spreadsheet many times to find common threads.

### **Evidence of Quality of Data**

Member checking was conducted for the trustworthiness of this project study that contributed to the credibility of the findings. Member checking is a way to validate the interview transcripts. By conducting member checking, I ensured that personal biases were not reflected in the interview transcripts, but rather the interview transcripts were a true reflection of the

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perceptions of the participants. Thus, interviews were transcribed verbatim, and member checking was conducted.

### **Discrepant Cases**

Discrepant cases were considered. The discrepant cases could help K-12 school principals and school district administrators with decision-making processes regarding the perceptions of principals regarding instructional leadership practices supporting teachers teaching ELL learners. Discrepant cases could help policymakers to make decisions to support teachers of ELL learners.

### **Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations**

#### **Assumptions**

The project site was a group of private K-12 language schools consisting of 43 schools and 86 school principals. K-12 teachers who taught ELL reported to senior district administrators that school principals struggled to implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers who taught ELL. I assumed that K-12 school principals implemented their instructional leadership practices to support teachers of ELL learners. I also assumed that teachers of ELL learners needed support from school principals to teach ELL learners.

I assumed that each participant provided honest responses during the interviews. I also assumed that the selection criteria were appropriate to assure that the participants experienced the same or similar phenomenon of the research. Another assumption was that the instructional leadership practices of school principals were related to teachers teaching ELL learners.

#### **Limitations**

This project study was limited because the responses were only from K-12 school principals. The participants responded based on their experiences with teachers of ELL learners.

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An expanded research scope may include other school districts that may yield different results. Another limitation was that senior school district administrators were not interviewed. Another limitation was that data from teachers were not collected. The study was also limited to the research design. The threats to validity were possible if some K-12 school principals refused to participate. The findings from this study may or may not be used by other school principals or generalized to other school districts.

### **Scope of Project Study**

The project study site was a group of private K-12 language schools consisting of 43 schools. K-12 school principals struggled to implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL. The scope of this project study was a group of private language schools.

### **Delimitations**

The principals who were selected had administrative experience of at least 2 years. The interviews were limited to K-12 school principals. A delimitation was that the majority of the students at the research site were ELL learners. Another delimitation of this project study was the timeframe of the interviews and the location of the study site.

I diligently analyzed the data to ensure that the results of the study precisely reflect a synopsis of the participant perspectives. The findings may be generalized or transferred to other similar schools based on reasonable explanations of the findings. Personal biases, preconceptions, and preferences were considered and recorded before the study to curtail any predispositions. Thus, throughout this project study, I constantly reflected on the education experience to ensure personal biases did not influence the findings.

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## **Data Analysis Results**

The problem addressed in this project study was that K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East were inconsistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. The purpose of this study was to understand how K-12 school principals were implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL. The conceptual framework was the instructional leadership theory of Murphey, Hallinger, Weil, and Mitman regarding the instructional leadership practices implemented by principals such as functions engaged by the principal, the kinds of activities performed by the principals, and procedures and practices of the school organization.

### **Method for Generating, Gathering, and Coding Data**

Upon obtaining Institutional Review Board approval from Walden University (IRB #07-17-20-0670612), I contacted the participants. For this basic qualitative research design, the participants were 15 K-12 school principals who were purposively selected. Data were collected via interviews. I interviewed the participants for this project study. This sample ( $n = 15$ ) was sufficient to represent a rich description of the participants' responses during the semistructured one-on-one video-conferencing interviews. I used open-ended interview questions. I also developed the interview protocol for this project study. I kept written notes on a separate journal to record my thoughts during the interviews and audiotaped each interview with the permission of each participant in order to carefully transcribe and analyze the interview data to ensure the quality of the interview data. I used Atlas.ti 7 to organize the interview data and my research journal. I transcribed all interviews within 48 hours after each interview. I used a system of colour-coding to categorize patterns: (a) organizing the interview data and journal notes, (b) reading the interview data to ascertain what story the participants are telling or what meaning is

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being conveyed, (c) using a coding procedure with labels that describe patterns of terms used by the participants, (d) creating a description of the setting, participants, and themes for analysis using the coded words, (e ) writing a narrative that depicts what the themes represent, and (f) interpreting the findings.

### **Coding Procedure**

I read each interview transcript at least twice in order to understand the participants' responses. During my second reading of each interview transcript, I created a summary of each participants' responses. After summarizing each interview transcript, I started to identify patterns. I colour-coded each interview transcript and identified words and phrases that the participants used frequently. Identified patterns were highlighted using colour code for each set and categorized by a label. All codes were assigned a number and entered into a spreadsheet. I colour categorized each interview transcript and created a coding tree, which included sub-categories of common words or phrases.

### **Research Question**

The research question that guided this project study was: What instructional leadership practices are K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East implementing to support teachers who teach ELL?

### **Themes and Descriptions**

I developed themes by eliminating redundancies. I used the interview transcripts as the first layer of my data analysis. Then, I used the description of the events as the second layer of my data analysis. The identified major themes were the third layer (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Themes*

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#	Theme
1	K-12 School Principals Need Professional Development on How to Support Teachers who Teach ELL Learners
2	K-12 School Principals Focused on Helping ELL Learners Reach Their Highest Potential
3	K-12 School Principals Shared Strategies that Help ELL Learners Reach Their Highest Potential

### **Theme 1: Professional Development on How to Support Teachers who Teach ELL Learners**

K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East need PD to support teachers who teach ELL. All participants, who were K-12 school principals stated that they need PD to know how to apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL support teachers who teach ELL. P1 stated, “I need to know more on how to apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers.” P1 explained that with proper PD, I could better support teachers of ELL learners. Although P1 taught literacy to ELL before they were promoted to school principal, P1 stated, “I need to offer more support to teachers who teach ELL learners in international schools.” P1 went on to say “I need to focus on the academic achievement of ELL learners. These are barriers in applying instructional leadership practices to support teachers in international private schools where all students are ELL learners.”

P2 stated, “I follow guidelines to focus on student achievement. My communication with teachers focuses on meeting all learners’ needs.” P2 added that teachers are expected in private

language schools to know how to modify lessons to fit the needs of ELL learners. P2 explained that ELL learners have unique academic needs. The main goal of P2 is to meet the academic needs of ELL learners. P2 emphasized that ELL learners have unique academic needs. As a result, P2 said, “I need more knowledge on how to support teachers who teach ELL learners.” PD on “how to support these teachers will be beneficial to me because I know they are state certified and well qualified to teach ELL learners.” P2 emphasized that “teachers of ELL learners are expected to be independent teachers who may need minimum support from the school principal.” A problematic area for P2 was how to “support teachers.” This participant said, “I have difficulty in understanding why should these teachers need support.” P2 said, “It is difficult for me to know without PD how I should support teachers who teach ELL learners.”

P3 has been a school principal for many academic years. This participant taught literacy to ELL learners and assumed that all teachers teaching literacy know how to teach. P3 said, “I am using my teaching experiences to help teachers with planning lessons. P3 added, “Teachers should know how to teach ELL learners; however, I need to know how to support these teachers.” P3 emphasized, “Perhaps with PD content on which instructional leadership practices are used in international schools in the Middle East will be beneficial to me to support teachers who teach ELL.” P3 concluded, “I need professional development to know what instructional leadership practices to implement to support teachers who teach ELL learners.”

P4 reported that PD is needed in order to improve instructional leadership practices because they supervise teachers who teach ELL learners in international schools in the Middle East. P4 said, “Although I had teaching experience in the regular classroom as a literacy teacher, in my role as a school principal, I need to know how to support teachers teaching ELL learners.” P4 believed, “Every teacher teaching ELL learners brings into the classroom excellent teaching

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strategies.” T4 noticed that some teachers have difficulties teaching in international settings. P4 focused on “teachers meeting the academic needs of ELL learners that can be very challenging for teachers.” P4 acknowledged that PD is needed to be able to assist teachers in teaching ELL learners. P4 stated, “I am using my knowledge of teaching a second language to be able to understand teachers; however, I do not know how to support these teachers.”

P5 acknowledged that ELL learners are unique students and attend school to learn English. These learners have many learning difficulties and limited English vocabularies. P5 said, “I expect my teachers to know how to teach these learners. I strive to meet the learners’ academic needs.” Regarding how to apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL learners, P5 said: “I need proper professional development to be able to support these teachers.”

P6 stated that PD is necessary. P6 was a literacy teacher for over 10 years. “I struggle to apply instructional leadership practices in my current principalship position in an international school in the Middle East to support teachers who teach here.” P6 added, “I am having difficulties in applying instructional leadership practices to support teachers because, in private schools, the expectations are to work with minimum supervision.” P6 reported: “I need training. I need to know what strategies to use to support teachers. It is difficult for me to know how to support teachers without training.”

Like P1-P6, P7 taught literacy for many years. “I supervise 12 teachers and need training to know how to support them to retain them in the international school” (P7). P7 stated, “I need to gain more skills on how to better support teachers. I need to know how to help literacy teachers in these international language schools. I also need to know what instructional leadership practices to use to support teachers.”

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P8 supervised more than 10 literacy teachers. P8 stated that the students are only ELL learners and the teachers teach only literacy to these students. P8 stated, “I struggle to apply my instructional leadership practices as a school principal in this international school in the Middle East to support literacy teachers.” P8 added, “We hire competent literacy teachers to teach only ELL learners. I truly do not know what instructional leadership practices to implement to support teachers who teach these learners.” P8 also suggested that I need PD to know how to support teachers. P8 said, “I need support from other administrators who have supervised teachers in these international school. I need professional development to know how to better understand the needs of these teachers.”

P9 supervised literacy teachers in international schools for 2 years. P9 expressed the need to know how to support teachers teaching ELL learners. Specifically, P9 said, “I need to know how to support teachers who teach ELL learners to help these learners to improve their literacy skills.” P9 focused on instruction and stated, “I do not know how to support these teachers because of the district’s high expectations of literacy teachers who teach in international language schools.” Also, P9 added, “I am not sure how to help these teachers.”

P10 reported, “I need to know how to support teachers who teach ELL learners.” This participant taught literacy to ELL learners for over 10 years. P10 added, “These are international schools in the Middle East. I need training to figure out how to implement my instructional leadership practices to support teachers.” P10 has been helping teachers by sharing teaching strategies that help ELL learners learn English. “I need professional development to better understand the needs of literacy teachers in international schools in the Middle East.”

P10 reported, “I would benefit from knowing more on how to support teachers because the expectations are different from those in public school districts.” P10 emphasized the need to

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focus on meeting the academic needs of ELL learners. “I need proper training to know how to support teachers in international language schools” (T10).

P11 said, “Literacy teachers are supported by having computer educational programs in their classrooms to help ELL learners with language acquisition.” P11 referred to computer educational programs as being a form of support for literacy teachers. P11 used language computer programs when they were language teachers in public schools. P11 was familiar with educational technologies to teach ELL learners inquiry-based learning and believed that such programs were providing enough support to literacy teachers. P11 stated, “Literacy teachers could use language education programs to teach literacy to ELL learners and be more independent as teachers requiring less support from the school principal.” P11 concluded, “I need training to know what instructional leadership practices to implement to support teachers who teach ELL learners.”

P12 taught literacy to ELL learners for 7 years and used language programs to help ELL learners to improve reading comprehension. P12, as an educational leader, reported, “I allocate capital resources for educational programs for literacy teachers to help ELL learners with language acquisition.” P12 said that literacy teachers usually asked for “cognitive activities to help ELL learners to improve proficiency in literacy.” This participant used cognitive activities in the classroom with educational literacy programs and expected all literacy teachers to do the same. P12’s goal was for literacy teachers to help ELL learners to better understand a literacy lesson. P12 said:

I need help with how to apply instructional leadership practices as a school principal in this international school in the Middle East to support literacy teachers because these are

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international language school having their own mission and vision statements and different expectations from literacy teachers.

P13 provided similar responses that were in line with all other participants. P13 revealed that literacy teachers in these international language schools have access to a plethora of educational programs to teach English. P13 said literacy teachers have access to not only educational literacy programs but also training to improve teaching practices. P13 reported, “I need additional training on how to implement my own instructional leadership practices in international schools in the Middle East to support literacy teachers.”

P14 motivated literacy teachers to participate in training sessions on how to improve teaching practices. P14 reported, “I support literacy teachers through training and access to literacy teaching materials.” P14 added, “In order to meet the academic needs of ELL learners, I expect all literacy teachers to know how to use best teaching practices to teach ELL learners.” P14 concluded, “As literacy teachers need support, I need more training on how to better use my instructional leadership practices to support teachers.”

P15 reported that all ELL learners needed help to improve their literacy skills and that as a school principal, they have very high expectations of literacy teachers to work with minimum supervision. P15 emphasized the need to advocate for all ELL learners to reach their highest potential. P15 also stated that literacy teachers need to know how to teach ELL learners to improve their literacy skills by focusing on language acquisition. Like P1 to P14, P15 used the same phrase that “I have high expectations of literacy teachers teaching in international language school.” P15 explained, “high expectations of literacy teachers were needed to help ELL learners reach their highest potential.” P15 reported, “These are international private language school;

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more training is needed on the instructional leadership practices to implement to support teachers.”

Most of the participants reported that they expect literacy teachers to work under minimum principal supervision. Literacy teachers were hired because they had experiences in teaching ELL learners. P1-P15 expected literacy teachers to know how to integrate ELL learners’ knowledge into language acquisition for ELL learners to improve their language proficiency via the usage of educational programs.

All participants reported that they need training on how to better support literacy teachers. P1-P15 revealed that they had not received proper training to know how to support teachers teaching ELL learners in international language schools. P1-P15 were state-certified literacy teachers and taught ELL learners. The participants requested training on how to better apply their instructional leadership practices as school principals in international schools in the Middle East. At the study site, P1-P15 reported that they need PD sessions to improve their instructional leadership practices in international language schools in the Middle East to support teachers who teach ELL learners.

P1-P15 reported that they need mentoring with instructional leadership practices when supervising literacy teachers. PD may better prepare these K-12 school principals of international language schools located in the Middle East to support teachers who teach ELL learners. Via PD, K-12 school principals may also better support literacy teachers by improving their instructional leadership practices. P1-P15 need to know how to support literacy teachers, although these participants allocated capital resources to train literacy teachers and to integrate educational language programs in the classrooms.

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In summary, supervising literacy teachers of ELL learners was challenging for P1-P15. These participants need PD to know how to improve their leadership skills to better support literacy teachers. In conclusion, P1-P15 need PD on how to implement their instructional leadership practices as K-12 school principals in international language schools located in the Middle East to support teachers who teach ELL learners.

## **Theme 2: Helping ELL Learners Reach Their Highest Potential**

P1-P15 reported that they focused on how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. P1 said that the main focus as a school principal was on helping ELL learners reach their highest potential. P2 applied instructional leadership practices to implement the school vision by providing literacy teachers with educational literacy programs to help ELL learners improve their proficiency in English. P3 focused on literacy teachers to improve their teaching strategies regarding literacy instruction. P4 revealed that as a former literacy teacher who used educational language program was aware that literacy teachers under her supervision can help ELL learners reach their highest potential. P5 revealed that funding was allocated for literacy teachers to integrate technology into the curriculum in order to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. P6 focused on literacy teachers' literacy instruction for teachers to use teaching literacy strategies to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. P7 focused on improving literacy state scores. P8 focused on literacy instruction and encouraged teachers to use different teaching strategies to teach literacy to ELL learners for these learners to reach their highest potential. P9 emphasized to literacy teachers to use effective teaching strategies for literacy instruction. P10 expected all literacy teachers to focus on literacy content and on using effective teaching strategies. P11 expressed the need to focus on increasing literacy state scores. P12 was aware that literacy is the hardest subject to teach to ELL learners. P13 expected all literacy

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teachers to apply the best teaching practises for the state scores in literacy to increase. P14 emphasized that literacy teachers must use effective teaching strategies for literacy state scores to increase. P15 implied that literacy teachers must use the best teaching practices to help ELL learners to do better on literacy state tests.

P1 stated that instructional leadership practices are applied to develop the entire school. P1 explained that every literacy teacher should be on “the same page when it comes to literacy instruction, particularly as it pertains to language development and ELL learners.” P1 provided training to literacy teachers, conducted parent workshops, and used state scores to help ELL learners to do better on literacy state tests. P2 focused on students’ learning and applied instructional leadership practices for ELL learners to receive research-based and student-centred instruction and literacy curriculum. P2 focused on curriculum, teaching, and resources for literacy teachers to help ELL learners to improve proficiency in literacy. P3 applied leadership practices to meet the school’s goals. P4 focused on school mission and vision to achieve students’ learning goals.

P4 measured students’ progress based on state test scores in order to make instructional decisions on how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. P5 maintained high expectations for all ELL learners and literacy teachers in order to “help ELL learners reach their highest potential.” P5 stated, “I have meetings with literacy teachers to help ELL learners reach their highest potential.” P6 reported, “My instructional leadership aims to improve student learning for every ELL learner reach to improve proficiency in literacy.” P7 encouraged literacy teachers to “involve ELL learners in curriculum activities.” P8 focused on “student-centred or self-directed learners to help ELL learners learn English.” P9 held “weekly meetings with literacy teachers to ensure that ELL learners receive quality instruction.” P10 aimed towards “improving and

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enhancing the learning experiences of ELL learners.” P11 monitored weekly ELL learners’ academic progress. P12 conducted frequent instructional observations of literacy teachers to ensure ELL learners improve their proficiency in English. P13 used curriculum reviews and classroom walkthroughs to “ensure that teachers support ELL learners.” P14 stated, “Monitoring students’ progress is the main goal.” P15 said, “Professional development is offered to teachers to give them the opportunities to further develop their teaching skills through themed workshops around differentiated instructions, data-analysis, measuring progress, setting high expectations, and so forth.” P1 reported, “I encourage literacy teachers to ensure that they engage ELL learners in learning”. P2 monitored literacy teachers to ensure that lessons are engaging and are including active learning for ELL learners. P3 focused on “higher-order questioning” as a strategy to help ELL learners reach their highest potential.” P4 collaborated with literacy teachers on how to help ELL learners learn English. P6 said, “I have an open-door policy to help ELL learners” (P5). “ELL learners need to reach their highest potential.” P7 said, “The main goal is for ELL learners to reach their highest potential.” P8 stated, “I aim at improving students' learning through effective teaching.” According to P9, “My main areas of focus are strategies for ELL learners to reach their highest potential.” P10 conducted formal and informal classrooms observations to ensure that literacy teachers “help ELL learners reach their highest potential.” P11 stated, “I encourage literacy teachers to help ELL learners.” P12 reported, “I apply my instructional leadership practices to ensure that literacy teachers engage ELL learners in higher-order thinking lesson activities.” P13 focused on student engagement “help ELL learners reach their highest potential.” According to P14, “I am visible in the hallways at various times throughout the school day. I check teachers’ classroom management through regular observations and walkthroughs to ensure that ELL learners reach their highest potential.” P15 reported, “My

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instructional leadership practices aim to improve students' learning. I focus on how to help ELL learners to improve their proficiency in English.”

P1-P15 evaluate literacy teachers on best teaching practice when teaching literacy to ELL learners. P1-P15 provided the same responses that literacy teachers must help ELL learners to reach their highest potential. The goal of P1-P15 was on helping ELL learners increase their proficiency in literacy in order to increase the state scores in literacy. The common phrase used by P1-P15 was that literacy teachers must “apply best teaching practices” for “state scores in literacy to increase.” P1-P15 believed that literacy teachers must apply best teaching practices to support students for state scores in literacy to increase. Another common phrase from P1-P15 was, “A plethora of teaching resources has been provided to literacy teachers.” For example, P1, P3, P6, P8, P11, and P13 stated that teaching resources included educational programs on decoding words for students to learn how to read. P2, P4, P5, P7, P12, P14, and P15 provided literacy teachers with reading resources and state scores in literacy did not meet district expectations. P1-P15 reported that literacy teachers have access to training and educational resources to help ELL learners reach their highest potential for state scores in literacy to increase. In conclusion, P1-15 reported that they focus on how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential in order to increase state scores in literacy.

### **Theme 3: Strategies that Help ELL Learners Reach Their Highest Potential**

According to P1, “Literacy teachers need to consider the cultural and religious norms when choosing reading materials in international language schools.” P2 stated that ELL learners need help to increase state scores in literacy and educational language programs could be integrated into the curriculum as a teaching strategy.” According to P3, “I have a department at my school called the Achievement Centre, which is designed to focus on the implementation and

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evaluation of the learning opportunities for ELL learners. The teaching strategies include setting high expectations for all ELL learners by promoting a global community classroom.” P4 focused on teaching strategies to help ELL learners conceptualized each lesson. P5 purchased and developed ELL teaching materials for literacy teachers to use cooperative learning as a teaching strategy. P6 encourages teachers to be facilitators of learning. P6 believed that literacy teachers can use small group instruction and help ELL learners as facilitators. Another teaching strategy emphasized by P7 was group instruction to meet the needs of ELL learners by using “culturally-responsive teaching methods to embrace the learner's culture and language.” According to P8, literacy teachers should use “a systematic way of translating keywords related to ELL learners’ native language for the learners to build a thesaurus.” P9 encouraged literacy teachers to “include cultural elements in their lessons to celebrate learners’ culture.” P10 suggested a strategy for “ELL learners to be allowed and encouraged to translate words to their mother language.” P11 provided literacy teachers with programs such as Accelerated Reader for students and teachers are expected to use small group instruction as a teaching strategy. P12 encouraged literacy teachers to use visual aids in the classroom as a teaching strategy to help ELL learners to visualize difficult concepts. P13 encouraged literacy teachers to use oral communication with ELL learners through group work. P14 focused on creating “readers and writers workshop in the classroom for ELL learners to be reading and writing.” P15 said, “I encourage teachers to use differentiated instruction.”

P1 stated, “We have a system whereby we mix groups of students to foster interaction between them and promote incremental and scaffolded instructional strategies that help students to construct knowledge.” P2 said, “Teachers use strategies for ELL instruction to arrange a

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purposeful grouping of students with varying proficiency levels for active interaction.” P3 reported, “We are providing students with relevant background knowledge about a topic to be discussed in class or activate their existing knowledge of a topic.” P4 said, “We Facilitating extended discussion for students with their peers after reading or between multiple readings of a text and making it more visual and activity or project-based.” P5 encouraged teachers to use any strategies to help ELL learners to improve the acquisition of literacy. P6 expected teachers to use pedagogical strategies “for practical application of language learning.” P7 requested from teachers several teaching strategies for ELL learners to “build skills to improve literacy.” P8 encouraged “team planning and collaboration to ensure that teaching strategies are effective to help ELL learners learn English.” P9 expected from teachers to integrate technology into the curriculum as a “teaching strategy to help ELL learners.” Like P9, P10 expected literacy teachers to “integrate technology into the literacy curriculum.” P9, P10, and P11 implemented the use of “phonics and reading recovery programs.” P9-P12 implemented “accelerated reader” to help ELL learners. Cording to P13, “Teachers create posters and hang them in their classrooms as a teaching strategy.” P14 expected teachers to use “visual aids and audio materials.” P5 said, “I help teachers to assist ELL learners in improving proficiency in literacy by providing appropriate visual and tactile aids for learning.”

### **Discrepant Cases**

All discrepant cases were considered. The discrepant cases were used in the final project study. These discrepant cases could be used by K-12 school principals with decision-making processes regarding instructional leadership practices supporting teachers teaching ELL learners.

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## **Evidence of Quality**

Member checking is a way to validate the interview transcripts. By conducting member checking, I ensured that personal biases were not reflected in the interview transcripts, but rather the interview transcripts were a true reflection of the perceptions of the participants. Member checking was conducted for the trustworthiness of this project study that contributed to the credibility of the findings. Thus, interviews were transcribed verbatim, and member checking was conducted.

## **Discussion of the Findings in Relation to Literature Review**

School leaders should set clear goals concerning teaching, learning, and decision-making. The leaders of learning programs should help ELL learners. ELL learners need to increase their proficiency in literacy because ELL learners have different learning challenges. ELL learners should be given opportunities to increase proficiency in English.

K-12 principals need to support ELL students. Also, K-12 school principals should be aware of the different instructional and academic abilities of ELL learners. School leaders need to ensure that their instructional leadership practices are effective for ELL learners. Also, school leaders should apply effective instructional leadership practices for the delivery of English language instruction to ELL learners within the school community.

ELL learners are a diverse group of learners with home languages different from the language of instruction in the classroom (Cassady et al., 2018). Also, ELL learners need to be motivated to learn English (Daniel et al., 2018). These learners have unique learning needs (Dodman, 2016). Teachers and school leaders need to ensure that the needs of these multilingual students are met (Ascenzi-Moreno et al., 2016; Johnson, 2020). Grouping students into the ELL category as early as Kindergarten sometimes leads to these children being in ELL programs

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throughout their schooling years (Umansky, 2016). Umansky (2018) stated that when a student is labelled as an ELL student, the education system and administrators have a responsibility to provide adequate and specialized services to meet the instructional and learning needs of the student.

Communication is an important instructional practice (Mady & Masson, 2018). Garrity et al. (2018) concluded that school officials need to promote the speaking of more than one language by ELL learners. Principals' instructional leadership practices need to fully embrace the delivery of bilingual learning programs (Menken & Solorza, 2015). Nguyen and Nguyen (2017) stated that language leadership instructional practices of K-12 principals are associated with the acquisition of the English language of ELL learners. According to Yolanda and Waxman (2016), K-12 principals do not have adequate expertise in instructional leadership practices to implement and deliver ELL programs in their schools effectively. K-12 principals should support teachers who teach ELL learners (Rowland, 2017). Howley et al. (2018) reported that there are no specific strategies to determine what leadership should look like.

Successful leaders of K-12 schools should implement effective instructional leadership within the schools (Felice & Von Esch, 2016). School principals should strive for positive learning outcomes for students (Harris et al., 2017). According to Heineke et al. (2018), school leaders should support teachers within the school community. Téllez and Manthey (2015) stated that principals should provide training opportunities for teachers who are teaching ELL learners. Teachers who teach ELL learners need training on how to identify the weaknesses in ELL learners' reading using different programs (Evans et al., 2019). Felice and Von Esch (2016) suggested that principals should provide opportunities for teachers to meet the instructional needs of ELL learners. Teachers who teach ELL learners need professional development

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(Heineke et al., 2018). Evans et al. (2019) reported that K-12 school principals need to support teachers to promote a more culturally responsive instructional practice.

Scammacca et al. (2016) said that interventions are beneficial to learners. Munguia (2017) reported that teachers should use reading comprehension interventions to help ELL learners. Ritchey et al. (2017) stated that teachers should use research-based comprehensive reading and language arts curriculum. Vaughn et al. (2019) suggested reading interventions for students. Clemens et al. (2019) said that teachers need to help language learners with decoding, reading, fluency, and vocabulary without hindering students' abilities to develop higher-order reading abilities.

ELL learners speak another language other than English at home (Reyes & Hwang, 2019). Johnson (2020) acknowledged that in order for ELL learners to be successful in school, they need to be exposed to instructional language teaching to meet their learning needs. Heineke et al. (2018) reported that teachers need to have the expertise to teach ELL learners in linguistically diverse communities.

K-12 school principals need to have training on instructional supervision of a school (Lee et al., 2019). PD for K-12 school principals should focus on different observational skills (Baecher et al., 2016). Black et al. (2018) said that K-12 principals need training to be able to handle the requirements of teachers, parents, and the school community. Esch (2018) reported that instructional leaders have an essential role in improving the educational opportunities offered to ELL learners in K-12 schools and need PD.

### **Project Deliverable**

The project deliverable is a 3-day PD for K-12 school principals based on the themes that emerged (see Table 1). The 3-day PD has been developed to meet the needs of K-12 school

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principals located in international schools in the Middle East. The audience will be K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East who supervise literacy teachers who teach mainly ELL. K-12 school principals who will attend the PD will learn how to implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers teaching ELL. School district administrators at the project site, which is a set of international schools located in the Middle East should support K-12 school principals by encouraging them to attend the PD sessions. K-12 school principals in these international schools located in the Middle East will learn how to successfully implement their instructional leadership practices to support teachers teaching ELL learners for these students to graduate from school resulting in positive social change.

### **Summary**

The problem addressed in this project study was that K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East were inconsistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. The purpose of this study was to understand how K-12 school principals were implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL. The conceptual framework was the instructional leadership theory of Murphey, Hallinger, Weil, and Mitman regarding the instructional leadership practices implemented by principals such as functions engaged by the principal, the kinds of activities performed by the principals, and procedures and practices of the school organization.

For this basic qualitative research design, participants were 15 K-12 school principals who were purposively selected. Data were collected via interviews. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis for emergent themes. Three themes emerged (see Table 1). The findings include a 3-day PD for K-12 school principals to support teachers who teach ELL. The PD content includes strategies to help K-12 school principals with ways to support teachers who

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teach ELL learners. In Section 3, a project based on the study findings is presented. Section 4 includes an outline of reflections and conclusions related to this doctoral project study.

### Section 3: The Project

#### **Introduction**

The problem addressed in this project study was that K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East were inconsistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. The purpose of this study was to understand how K-12 school principals were implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. The research question involved the instructional leadership practices K-12 school principals implement in international schools in the Middle East to support teachers who teach ELL. Participants were 15 K-12 school principals who were purposively selected. Data were collected via interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis for emergent themes.

The first theme was that K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East need PD to support teachers who teach ELL. All participants stated that they needed PD to know how to apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. Most participants reported that they expected literacy teachers to work under minimum principal supervision. Literacy teachers should have experience teaching ELL learners. All participants expected literacy teachers teaching ELL to know how to integrate ELL learners' knowledge into language acquisition to improve their language proficiency.

The second theme was that K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East at the project site focused on how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. Participants said that literacy teachers must help ELL learners to reach their highest potential. Literacy teachers must apply the best teaching practices for students to pass state tests in literacy. Participants also reported that literacy teachers have access to training and educational resources

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to help ELLs reach their highest potential for state scores in literacy to increase. Thus, participants focused on how to help their ELLs reach their highest potential.

The third theme was that participants shared strategies that help ELLs reach their highest potential. Strategies include consideration of choosing reading materials in international language schools, use of educational language programs to be integrated into the curriculum, setting high expectations for all ELLs by using cooperative learning, group instruction to meet the needs of ELL, team planning, and integrating technology into the literacy curriculum.

### **Project Purpose**

The project is a 3-day PD plan for K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East to use new information on how to implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. The content of the 3-day PD plan is based on themes that emerged from interviews with K-12 school principals in private international schools located in the Middle East. I created the project as a supplemental support for K-12 school principals to be offered during the school year (see Appendix A).

The purpose of the 3-day PD plan for K-12 school principals in international schools is to provide intensified support for K-12 school principals who have been inconsistent in terms of implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL learners. PD session topics include strategies on how to consistently implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL learners.

### **Project Outcomes**

The project outcomes of the 3-day PD include hands-on training for K-12 school principals regarding specific strategies to apply instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers. Project outcomes are based on themes that emerged. The 3-day PD was

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developed to meet the needs of K-12 school principals located in international schools in the Middle East. Because the audience will be K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East who supervise literacy teachers who teach mainly ELL learners, the content will be taught to help the attendees with the implementation of instructional leadership practices to support teachers teaching ELL learners. School district administrators at the project site will be asked to encourage K-12 school principals to attend PD sessions. The outcome of this project is for K-12 school principals in these international schools located in the Middle East to learn how to successfully implement their instructional leadership practices to support teachers teaching ELL learners in order for these students to graduate from school.

### **Project Outline**

The PD plan will consist of three sessions scheduled over 3 days. The intended target audience for the PD is K-12 school principals from international schools in the Middle East. Senior school district administrators will decide when to offer the 3-day PD sessions. The sessions will occur in the following sequence.

During Session 1, K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East need PD on how to support teachers who teach ELL learners. Participants stated that they need PD to know how to apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL learners. Attendees will learn strategies on how to apply their own instructional leadership practices to support teachers. Attendees will also learn about barriers in terms of applying instructional leadership practices to support teachers in international private schools where all students are ELL learners. K-12 school principals who attend PD sessions will learn about mentoring and instructional leadership practices when supervising literacy teachers.

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During Session 2, K-12 school principals at the project site focused on how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. PD content will include information on how principals can support literacy teachers to improve their teaching strategies regarding literacy instruction. Attendees will also learn how to support literacy teachers to integrate technology into the literacy curriculum in order to help ELL learners reach their highest potential and to pass state tests in literacy. Another strategy for attendees to learn is how to focus on increasing literacy state scores in literacy by supporting literacy teachers. Hands-on literacy activities will be provided to (a) encourage literacy teachers to ensure that they engage ELL learners in learning, (b) share with literacy teachers active learning activities for ELL learners, (c) encourage literacy teachers to use higher-order questioning as a strategy to help ELL learners, (d) collaborate with literacy teachers on how to help ELL learners learn English, (e) improve students' learning through effective teaching strategies, (f) conduct formal and informal classrooms observations to ensure that literacy teachers help ELL learners reach their highest potential (

During Session 3, K-12 school principals can support literacy teachers with teaching and learning strategies to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. The 3-day PD content will include information on how principals can support literacy teachers by: (a) considering the cultural and religious norms when choosing reading materials in international language schools, (b) integrating educational language programs into the literacy curriculum, (c) setting high expectations for all ELL, (d) using strategies to help ELL conceptualize each lesson, (e) developing teaching materials for literacy teachers to use cooperative learning as a teaching strategy, (f) encouraging teachers to be facilitators of learning; (g) using small group instruction; (h) using group instruction to meet the needs of ELL learners, (i) including cultural elements in the lessons to celebrate learners' culture, (j) using visual aids in the classroom as a teaching

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strategy to help ELL learners to visualize difficult concepts, (k) using differentiated instruction, (l) using strategies to help ELL learners to improve the acquisition of literacy, (m) encouraging team planning and collaboration to ensure that teaching strategies are effective to help ELL learners learn English, (n) creating posters, and (o) using visual aids and audio materials.

### **Project Implementation**

The 3-day PD implementation will occur at the project site, which is a set of international language schools. Funding is needed for me to present the PD sessions to K-12 school principals. I will conduct senior district administrators for their support to secure the PD sessions. I will request presentation materials for the PowerPoint Presentations such as handouts for all hands-on activities, chart paper, markers, and computers with access to the Internet. I will also request permission to use the conference room at the school district for the PD sessions.

### **Rationale**

During the PD sessions, I will include discussions based on the aforementioned themes. The PD content will be based on best instructional leadership practices to know how to support literacy teachers. I will present, implement, monitor, and evaluate the PD sessions. I will ask senior school district administrators to promote the 3-day PD for K-12 school principals to attend. I will attempt to present the 3-day PD to similar international schools located in the Middle East. After the 3-day PD is offered for 3 academic years, a program evaluation will assist K-12 school principals and senior school district administrators in making decisions regarding the support for this kind of extra intensified PD for all K-12 school principals.

Learning programs have been created to support ELLs (Miller, 2018). Language programs and school activities should be designed to support the learning of ELLs (Baecher et al., 2016). ELLs lack proficiency in literacy and need support in K-12 schools (Dobinson &

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Buchori, 2016). School principals need to know how to apply instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers and ELLs (Lee et al., 2018). Also, K-12 school principals should be aware of the different instructional and academic abilities of ELLs (Ovando & Combs, 2019). Cassady et al. (2018) stated that K-12 principals need to support both the development of literacy within schools and teachers teaching ELLs. ELLs need to develop communication skills (Garrity et al., 2018). Thus, principals should create a school community with a shared expectation of learning and a shared characteristic of trust (Rowland, 2017). Howley et al. (2018) acknowledged that Principals' instructional leadership practices impact students' learning. Felice and Von Esch (2016) suggested that Principals and administrators must have a strategy to create opportunities to meet the instructional needs of ELLs in their school community.

K-12 school principals need to support teachers. There are different listening comprehension and reading skills programs that can be used for ELL learners. Teachers need to help language learners with decoding, reading, fluency, and vocabulary. Also, there is a growing need for principals to focus on and support the needs of language learners in all subject areas. Instructional leaders have an essential role in improving the educational opportunities offered to ELL learners.

### **Review of the Literature**

The principal should support teachers and learners as an instructional leader. PD for principals can help them improve their instructional practices (Park et al., 2019). According to Park et al. (2019), school principals need to support teachers by offering PD on best teaching practices. PD content helps teachers ensure students' academic achievement in all subject areas (Park et al., 2019). Day et al. (2016) stated that a school's achievement is measured by students' academic results. Principal leadership affects teachers' instruction (Lomos et al., 2011). Park et

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al. (2019) reported that teachers need PD. Akiba and Liang (2016) said that teacher's participation in PD has proven to be a useful tool towards student's achievement and growth. School leaders need to improve classroom teaching (Veelen et al., 2017). Veelen et al. (2017) suggested that PD learning is conceptualized as non-formal learning, which occurs within the school and continues throughout an individual's career.

K-12 school principal need to ensure that relevant training is put in place to meet the needs of teachers (Vanblaerel et al., 2018). PD can help principals and teachers with their professional growth (Vanblaerel et al., 2018). Vanblaerel et al. (2018) examined developmental leadership for interpersonal professional learning community characteristics. Vanblaerel et al. (2018) concluded that teachers who perceive high group-oriented departmental leadership tend to have a collective responsibility within their department. Leaders must be carefully selected (Vanblaerel et al., 2018).

According to Cochran-Smith (2016), education continues to change globally by the use of technology as well as the societal expectation of students, teachers, and the educational system. Therefore, educators need to be responsive to the changes happening in education on a global scale. Vanblaerel et al. (2018) concluded that professional learning communities significantly improve teaching and learning instructions.

Teacher evaluations by school leaders inform professional development (Smith et al., 2019). Smith et al. (2019) reported that teacher evaluation processes include evaluations of instructional practices and teacher efficacy within the classroom. The types of evaluation given to teachers can affect their instructional practices (Tuytens & Devos, 2014). Smith et al. (2019) suggested that while teachers' responses to their evaluation feedback are essential to their professional development, there is not enough research to suggest that teacher's reactions to their

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evaluation feedback is related to their instructional practices even though this feedback is intended to improve teacher's instructional practice. Scholars have indicated that teacher's self-efficacy of instructional practices can lead to making and inform a decision on PD strategies and activities that can be aligned to filling the gaps in teacher's instructional practices.

Ford et al. (2017) and Smith et al. (2019) argued that PD is the principal's response to addressing gaps or criticism in the delivery of instructional practices. Also, if teachers are not given enough PD for them to develop new skills and strategies, this reduces their level of self-efficacy in the way they deliver teaching and learning instructions. Coaching and constructive feedback provide a form of PD that can give positive outcomes to teachers to help them to master new professional skills as well as help them to increase their self-efficacy in the delivery of teaching and learning instructions. According to Smith et al. (2019), targeted PD contributes to sustainable change and improvement in teacher instructional practices and personal development.

According to Heck et al. (2017), when school leaders improve their instructional practices through PD, teachers will see the changes, and students will also benefit from it. This will raise the standards and expectations for students' work as well as the teacher's professional performance. Quinn et al. (2018) said that principals need to promote professional support and professional learning community. For example, teachers are more comfortable at sharing their practices among themselves. Teachers would like to get peer-reviewed feedback, which can either be from other experienced teachers or principals during a PD session. Also, Smith et al. (2019) reported that school principals can facilitate PD by encouraging collaborative working environments with teachers who are encouraged to share resources and ideas with new teachers to enrich their instructional practices. Rigby et al. (2017) said that school principals actions have

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an effect on what happens in the classroom and how students and teachers engage in instructional practices.

There has been a paradigm shift in leadership roles where school principals are expected to be instructional leaders who support teachers' learning. For example, it is the responsibility of the school principal to attend and observe the teaching and learning going on within the classroom. And as such, whenever it is observed during the delivery of teaching and learning instructions would allow for more job-embedded professional development to support instructional practices of K-12 teachers. Rigby et al. (2017) further added that school principals could use the data and information gathered from classroom observation to promote PD and collaboration among teachers and within a school community. School principals must also share their expected instructional practices for how teachers can improve their instructional practices. This can be done through coaching and PD (Rigby et al., 2017).

There is a need for PD. Chua et al. (2020) used semistructured interviews to collect data from leaders in Chinese secondary schools regarding peer coaching, sharing of personal teaching practices, and PD. Chua et al. (2020) found that some of the challenges that teachers in the professional learning community face include but are not limited to the extra workload on teachers, lack of support from principals and sometimes poor delivery of PD sessions. Chua et al. (2020) argued that teachers need to understand the importance of the changes in teaching practices worldwide. Chua et al. (2020) acknowledged that teacher PD is crucial to improving the education system. Teachers who participate in the professional learning community also participate in a professional conversation with job alike teachers, which could, in turn, help them in developing their teaching pedagogical skills (Chua et al., 2020).

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According to Chua et al. (2020), research studies conducted in Western countries indicated that there is a close relationship between a student's high level of achievement and the way which teachers collaborate among themselves to deliver teaching and learning instructions. Brigandi et al. (2019) acknowledged that continuous PD can improve teachers' knowledge and teaching skills. Brigandi et al. (2019) examined the impact of PD as a strategy of building a teachers' knowledge regarding the strategies to use when delivering teaching and learning instructions in a gifted education program. Brigandi et al. (2019) stated that PD is intentionally developed for educators for them to develop their expertise through workshops, courses, professional conferences, and independent studies. The benefits of PD include an increase in knowledge in a specific subject area, the opportunity to develop more skills as well as to improve pedagogical practices to enrich the delivery of teaching and learning instructions. Brigandi et al. (2019) said that PD is necessary to improve teacher's effectiveness. Some teachers have mixed feedback on their effectiveness in teaching. For example, some teachers suggest that PD does not necessarily have an impact on their teaching and neither does it have and sustainable change in teacher's instructional practices (Brigandi et al., 2019).

School principals need to participate in PD. Koonce et al. (2019) examined the challenges that hinder the principals' engagement in the PD process. Koonce et al. (2019) suggested that some schools have cultivated the habit of planning and evaluating their PD to ensure that it is consistent and that it delivers high-level professional learning to teachers. Koonce et al. (2019) reported that teachers have certain expectations before attending a PD session. The role of the school principal is to make decisions on the type of PD that should be offered to teachers. Hence, if professional development is not planned correctly, it will affect the staff and the school. Koonce et al. (2019) wrote that one of the critical points to consider when planning PD activities

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should include the popularity of the PD and how easy it is for teachers to engage in the activities scheduled in the PD. PD should yield results that will promote teacher growth and student achievement. Therefore, PD should be used to provide staff with strategies and positive learning outcomes. School principals must also be active, knowledgeable, and engage in PD to meet the needs of the teachers.

The school principal's role in planning a dynamic professional event should be intentional and purposeful towards improving teaching and learning practices as well as student and learning outcomes in the school. Principals, teachers and practitioners must participate in professional development training (Johnson, 2016). Johnson (2016) explored PD workshops aimed at giving teachers training on sustainable strategies to use with students who are learning foreign languages. Badri et al. (2016) conducted a research survey in Abu Dhabi to get teachers' opinion on PD. To understand teachers' perceptions of PD, how it affects their teaching as well as the challenges they face about PD. The survey was carried out among teachers in public and private schools. The findings indicated that male teachers in public schools have a higher perception of PD. Female teachers indicated in the survey that there are higher barriers to participating in PD. Badri et al. (2016) concluded that facilitators and providers of PD must ensure that they deliver meaningful and effective PD. Badri et al. (2016) acknowledged that continuous PD provides teachers with the opportunity to bridge the gaps in their skills set.

Parkhouse et al. (2019) suggested that multicultural and intercultural education should be included in the curriculum in order to reduce inequitable academic outcomes for students. It is important for educators to have culturally responsive teaching as well as culturally sustain pedagogical approaches (Parkhouse et al. 2019). It is, therefore, important to ensure that PD programs include culturally sustaining pedagogies. Parkhouse et al. (2019) suggested that there

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are not enough multicultural PD trainings available to teachers and principals. According to Parkhouse et al. (2019), the characteristics of school principals positively influence the effectiveness of PD for improving student's learning outcomes. Parkhouse et al. (2019) acknowledged that school principals need to have a better understanding of how teachers incorporate and implement new ideas in teaching and learning.

Moore (2018) suggested that educators must have cultural awareness to ensure that they are able to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students in order to promote culturally responsive teaching in K-12 schools. Moore's (2018) framework focused on using critically reflective collaborative professional learning community and PD activities with teachers to allow them to reflect on the literature on culturally responsive practices. Moore (2018) suggested that for educators to be culturally responsive, they need to have an awareness and respect for diversity.

PD is essential for teachers and principals. Thorpe (2017) suggested that some of the PD available to middle school leaders might not really be suited to the position. Thorpe (2017) examined using meta reflection as a form of PD for middle school leaders who are directly responsible for academic subjects. The meta reflection type of PD involves practitioners participating in joined activities where they collaborate to have deeper and more meaningful forms of reflection that are descriptive and analytical in nature and related to their day to day practice and professional experience.

Sato et al. (2019) examined secondary school teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) taking part in collaborative PD to further understand their practices on communicative language teaching. Sato et al. (2019) suggested that PD should focus on teacher development because this relates to the school and classroom where teachers deliver and

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implement continuous learning. Heinkey et al. (2018) stated that it is important to prioritize English language learners by providing teachers with linguistically responsive PD. Because most schools have seen a growth in the diverse population of students in schools. Teachers are often unprepared or underprepared to deliver teaching and learning instructions tailored to English language learners. Some teachers also understand and are knowledgeable to assist them in planning and implementing instructions for students who speak different languages. Hence, these teachers require theoretical and research-based PD to assist them in recognizing and responding to a students' diverse and cultural backgrounds. PD for such teachers should be linguistically responsive to meet the diverse needs of learners in schools.

School principals have their own perceptions in regards to PD and its impact on school improvement. School principals need to continue to participate in effective PD. Brion (2020) examined ways to which school principals can plan, assess, and follow up on the delivery of PD as well as its impact on students' learning outcome. PD is a way for teachers to affirm their expertise in relation to teaching and learning as well as to check for understanding. Silva et al. (2019) said that PD should be supported with pedagogical innovation linked to teachers' understanding and how they can adapt innovative ideas to their classroom environment. Silva et al. (2019) suggested that when teachers engage in PD, it creates the fundamental of effective educational innovation. Silva et al. (2019) stated that teacher-lead discussions are important during PD training.

PD applies to all staff within the school community. Keung et al. (2019) examined teachers' beliefs and perceptions as well as the leadership practices of school principals in relation to educating Kindergarten children in Hong Kong. A survey was conducted among 2,120 teachers to gather their perception on the relationship between leadership practices and

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professional learning community. The result indicated that the leadership practices of school principals is related to professional learning community and PD offered to teachers. The teachers surveyed indicated that PD is related to holistic child development. Teachers indicated that Kindergarten principals play a vital role in supporting a culture that facilitates teachers' learning.

Keung et al. (2019) reported that recent educational reforms have focused on enriching the collaborative cultures of teachers through building professional learning communities among Kindergarten teachers. There is also a paradigm shift in their approach of PD from the concept of PD been facilitated by an expert to a more participatory knowledge construction model, which focuses on conducting ongoing PD where teachers have the opportunity to reflect and collaborate, to form a common goal on the delivery of children's' learning and instruction. Keung et al. (2019) found that some contextual factors such as leadership practices, workplace conditions and PD policies help promote the delivery of ongoing PD and promote a professional learning community.

PD helps in improving teachers' competencies in the subject area. Borg (2018) argued that structured and formal PD interventions can have an impact on students and the school community, and can support the teaching of English language within the classroom. Borg (2018) further highlighted that teachers teaching competency can be linked to student learning outcomes. Hence, it is critical to enhance teacher quality as these places an important role in improving the delivery of teaching and learning instructions. PD must be planned and designed to ensure that teachers benefit from attending and in turn, improve their competency within the classroom.

During PD training, teachers should engage in individual activities that offer professional and high-level information such as having access to professional articles, participation in teacher

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development projects organized by external stakeholders. Borg (2018) suggested that a variety of PD would benefit teachers who teach English language to students. For example, English language teaching has a framework that supports the delivery of PD using external agencies. Borg (2018) reported that teacher competency frameworks comprise a variety of skills, knowledge, disposition, and behaviors targeted at teachers of English language.

Boylan (2018) said that it is important for teachers to lead and participate in the delivery of PD training. As this would help them to initiate and facilitate professional learning in and out of the school community. Boylan (2018) suggested that teachers are being encouraged to lead PD within their school jurisdiction, and this has been embedded in school policies to allow teacher designation and teacher leadership roles. Boylan (2018) further added that principals' role in leading PD is complex and multifaceted. There are two different PD leadership that should be considered when looking at the principal's role when planning PD, such as the pedagogical leadership of professional learning. Boylan (2018) stated that there has been changes in PD in many countries which has led to the reconfiguration of PD activity and relationship. For example, the location of where PD takes place. Boylan (2018) further suggested that the leadership of PD is critical to teacher leadership with a particular focus on inter-school PD activities. By creating a network of teachers who can collaborate and support one another to build a strong professional learning community as well as building a strong collegial relationship that is linked to morale and social purpose beyond the school community.

Roth et al. (2019) examined how teachers can be supported in developing knowledge and skills to enrich their teaching practices through traditional PD. The framework for K-12 science education requires teachers to have a strong understanding of scientific ideas and practices that would enable them to teach science to students and incorporate this with student's prior

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knowledge about science. Hence, Roth et al. (2019) suggested that the current PD in K-12 schools is not sufficient to support the curriculum standard for science. More research is needed to examine the effectiveness of PD that will enrich the teaching practices of K-12 science teachers in order to have a positive learning outcome for science students. Roth et al. (2019) concluded that there are few research studies aimed at examining the impact of PD on teachers and student learning of science.

Noonan (2019) reported that PD is seen by teachers, stakeholders, principals, and policymakers to be a value-added way of improving instructions for students. PD can be formal or informal involving individual teachers, groups of peer observations. Teachers' professional identity and beliefs are formed and reformed in a way that represents diverse factors and influences. One of which is how they function and form relationships within the school culture and professional learning community.

### **Project Description**

The PD plan will be offered to K-12 school principals over 3 days. Session 1 is designed to help K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East to apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL learners. Strategies on how to apply their own instructional leadership practices to support teachers will be presented. The barriers in applying instructional leadership practices to support teachers in international private schools where all students are ELL learners will also be presented. Mentoring and instructional leadership practices when supervising literacy teachers will also be presented.

Session 2 is designed to help K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East at the project site to learn how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. Integration of technology into the literacy curriculum will be presented in order to help ELL

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learners reach their highest potential and to past state tests in literacy. Another strategy for the attendees to learn is how to focus on increasing literacy state scores in literacy by supporting literacy teachers. Hands-on activities will be provided for the attendees to use to (a) encourage literacy teachers to ensure that they engage ELL learners in learning, (b) share with literacy teachers active learning activities for ELL learners, (c) encourage literacy teachers to use higher-order questioning as a strategy to help ELL learners, (d) collaborate with literacy teachers on how to help ELL learners learn English, (e) improve students' learning through effective teaching strategies, (f) conduct formal and informal classrooms observations to ensure that literacy teachers help ELL learners reach their highest potential, (g) engage ELL learners in higher-order thinking lesson activities, (h) to support literacy teachers to help ELL learners increase their proficiency in literacy in order to increase the state scores in literacy, (i) encourage literacy teachers to apply best teaching practices, and (j) use educational programs regarding literacy.

Session 3 is designed to help K-12 school principals to better support literacy teachers with teaching and learning strategies to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. The attendees who will attend the 3-day PD will learn how to support literacy teachers with teaching and learning strategies to help ELL learners reach their highest potential focusing. The 3-day PD content will include information on how principals can support literacy teachers by: (a) considering the cultural and religious norms when choosing reading materials in international language schools, (b) integrating educational language programs into the literacy curriculum, (c) setting high expectations for all ELL learners, (d) using strategies to help ELL learners conceptualize each lesson, (e) developing teaching materials for literacy teachers to use cooperative learning as a teaching strategy, (f) encouraging teachers to be facilitators of learning; (g) using small group instruction; (h) using group instruction to meet the needs of ELL learners,

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(i) including cultural elements in the lessons to celebrate learners' culture, (j) using visual aids in the classroom as a teaching strategy to help ELL learners to visualize difficult concepts, (k) using differentiated instruction, (l) using strategies to help ELL learners to improve the acquisition of literacy, (m) encouraging team planning and collaboration to ensure that teaching strategies are effective to help ELL learners learn English, (n) creating posters, and (o) using visual aids and audio materials.

**Needed Resources, Existing Supports, Barriers, and Solutions**

K-12 school principals will have to commit to 3 days of PD. Materials will be needed for the presentation of the project. PowerPoint Presentation slides, chart paper, markers, and handouts will be requested from senior district administrators responsible for PD. Funding is needed to support the PD sessions, and senior district administrators will be asked for human and capital resources for the PD sessions.

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**Project Implementation and Timetable**

The attendees will be K-12 school principals. The PD content is based on the themes. I developed the project for K-12 school principals and will ask senior district administrators for permission to present the project at the school district. I will also ask for human and capital resources needed for the presentation of the project. At the end of the 3-day sessions, I will ask the attendees to fill out the evaluation forms and return to me.

The project timetable (see Table 2) includes strategies to support literacy teachers. The PD will be implemented as an intensified support based on the themes that emerged from interviews with K-12 school principals. The content will be delivered during the school year to K-12 school principals. For the project to be implemented, funding is needed. I will conduct senior district administrators for human and capital resources needed to deliver the PD sessions.

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Table 2

*3-Day Schedule for Professional Development for K-12 School Principals*

Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Activity 1: Learning theories activities.	Activity 1: Group work on active learning.	Activity 1: Classroom activities which promote the acquisition of literacy, fluency and proficiency
9:00 - 10:00 a.m.	Activity 2: Link the theories to general learning	Activity 2: Table talk—What helps a diverse school community thrive	Activity 2: Intense projects
10:20 - 12:00 p.m.	Activity 3: ELL teachers' professional disposition (group work)	Activity 3: explanation and discussion of equitable instructional leadership practices in a diverse school community.	Activity 3: Table talk, getting parents involved in a culturally responsive classroom.
12:00 -1:00 p.m.	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.	Activity 4: How to coach ELL teachers	Activity 4: Table Talk—What makes K-12 school principals effective?	Activity 4: Discussion—School administrators' policy recommendations to policymakers on how to provide training for ELL teachers
2:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Activity 5: How to give feedback to ELL teachers after a literacy lesson classroom observation	Activity 5: Group reflection and recommendations to the policymakers to support school leaders in the delivery of ELL curriculum	Activity 5: Group reflection and recommendations to the policymakers to support school leaders in a diverse community school
3:30 - 4:00 p.m.	Activity 6: write a short description of what a culturally responsive classroom should look and feel like (individual activity).	Activity 6: Evaluation of activity 5	Activity 6: Evaluation activity 4, is this achievable?



## **Roles and Responsibilities**

I will send emails to all K-12 school principals to inform them of the purpose and content of the 3-day PD sessions. I will also have ongoing discussions with senior district administrators regarding the benefits of this project and the needed resources to present the project to K-12 school principals. The roles and responsibilities of K-12 school principals will be to attend the PD sessions to learn new strategies to better apply their instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers. The roles and responsibilities of senior district administrators will be to support K-12 school principals with PD resources that will include PowerPoint Presentations, chart paper, markers, and handouts. My responsibility as a researcher will be to meet with senior district administrators to present the findings of this project study and to ask for permission to schedule and facilitate the 3-day PD sessions. Also, my responsibility will be to organize and present the PD sessions. I will prepare all materials for the PD sessions.

## **Project Evaluation Plan**

I will meet with senior district administrators to request needed resources to present the findings of this project study to K-12 school principals. I will present the 3-day PD sessions to K-12 school principals. Based on action plans that will be created, I will conduct an evaluation of this project. Outcome-based evaluation will be used to measure the impact of PD project implementation. Short and long-term PD goals will be evaluated by me. The attendees, who will be K-12 school principals, will be asked to provide written feedback by completing an evaluation form (see Appendix C). Feedback from the PD evaluations will be shared with K-12 school principals and senior district administrators.

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## **Project Implications**

The findings of this project study are included in 3-day PD. K-12 school principals will benefit from the 3-day PD sessions. K-12 school principals will learn how to better implement their instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers. PD hands-on activities will help K-12 school principals to know how to support literacy teachers at the project site. Hands-on activities include:

- strategies on how to apply their own instructional leadership practices to support teachers
  - barriers in applying instructional leadership practices to support teachers in international private schools where all students are ELL learners
  - mentoring and instructional leadership practices when supervising literacy teachers
  - how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential
  - how to support literacy teachers while focusing on how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential
  - information on how principals can support literacy teachers to improve their teaching strategies regarding literacy instruction
  - how to support literacy teachers to integrate technology into the literacy curriculum
  - how to focus on increasing literacy state scores in literacy by supporting literacy teachers
  - hands-on activities for the attendees to use to (a) encourage literacy teachers to ensure that they engage ELL learners in learning, (b) share with literacy teachers
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active learning activities for ELL learners, (c) encourage literacy teachers to use higher-order questioning as a strategy to help ELL learners, (d) collaborate with literacy teachers on how to help ELL learners learn English, (e) improve students' learning through effective teaching strategies, (f) conduct formal and informal classrooms observations to ensure that literacy teachers help ELL learners reach their highest potential, (g) engage ELL learners in higher-order thinking lesson activities, (h) to support literacy teachers to help ELL learners increase their proficiency in literacy in order to increase the state scores in literacy, (i) encourage literacy teachers to apply best teaching practices, and (j) use educational programs regarding literacy.

- how to support literacy teachers with teaching and learning strategies to help ELL learners reach their highest potential focusing
  - information on how principals can support literacy teachers by: (a) considering the cultural and religious norms when choosing reading materials in international language schools, (b) integrating educational language programs into the literacy curriculum, (c) setting high expectations for all ELL learners, (d) using strategies to help ELL learners conceptualize each lesson, (e) developing teaching materials for literacy teachers to use cooperative learning as a teaching strategy, (f) encouraging teachers to be facilitators of learning; (g) using small group instruction; (h) using group instruction to meet the needs of ELL learners, (i) including cultural elements in the lessons to celebrate learners' culture, (j) using visual aids in the classroom as a teaching strategy to help ELL learners to visualize difficult concepts, (k) using differentiated instruction, (l) using strategies
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to help ELL learners to improve the acquisition of literacy, (m) encouraging team planning and collaboration to ensure that teaching strategies are effective to help ELL learners learn English, (n) creating posters, and (o) using visual aids and audio materials.

The project should be used by school district administrators for decision-making processes to support literacy teachers. Senior school district administrators should offer more PD opportunities for K-12 school principals to support literacy teachers for the benefit of ELL learners. Implications for positive social change include a 3-day PD plan with strategies for K-12 school principals to use to support literacy teachers for the benefit of students.

### **Direction for Future Research**

Further research could be conducted in other settings and with more participants. Specifically, future scholars, willing to replicate this project study, should interview more K-12 school principals. I interviewed 15 K-12 school principals in different locations within a set of private international language schools by using an interview protocol. Settings of interest could include other locations in the Middle East. Scholars should interview senior district administrators to identify ways to support K-12 school principals to better implement their instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers. Scholars should also interview literacy teachers to identify factors influencing their teaching practices. I recommend that school leaders explore PD opportunities for senior district administrators and literacy teachers to engender a greater awareness of how K-12 school principals apply instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers. I also recommend for researchers, school and district leaders, and university leaders to advocate for the support of PD for K-12 school principals.

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## Summary

The participants were 15 K-12 school principals who were purposively selected. Data were collected via interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis for emergent themes. The project is a 3-day PD plan for K-12 school principals in international schools located in the Middle East to use new information on how to implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELLs. PD session topics include strategies on how to consistently implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The PD plan will consist of three sessions scheduled over 3 days. The intended target audience for the PD will be K-12 school principals. Senior school district administrators will decide when to offer the 3-day PD sessions. The sessions will occur in the following sequence:

Session 1: K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East need PD on how to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The participants who were K-12 school principals stated that they need PD to know how to apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers who teach ELL learners. The attendees will learn strategies on how to apply their own instructional leadership practices to support teachers. The attendees will also learn the barriers in applying instructional leadership practices to support teachers in international private schools where all students are ELL learners. K-12 school principals who will attend the PD sessions will learn about mentoring and instructional leadership practices when supervising literacy teachers.

Session 2: K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East at the project site focused on how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. The attendees who will attend the 3-day PD will learn how to support literacy teachers while focusing on how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. The 3-day PD content will include information

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on how principals can support literacy teachers to improve their teaching strategies regarding literacy instruction. The attendees will also learn how to support literacy teachers to integrate technology into the literacy curriculum in order to help ELL learners reach their highest potential and to pass state tests in literacy. Another strategy for the attendees to learn is how to focus on increasing literacy state scores in literacy by supporting literacy teachers. Hands-on activities will be provided for the attendees to use to (a) encourage literacy teachers to ensure that they engage ELL learners in learning, (b) share with literacy teachers active learning activities for ELL learners, (c) encourage literacy teachers to use higher-order questioning as a strategy to help ELL learners, (d) collaborate with literacy teachers on how to help ELL learners learn English, (e) improve students' learning through effective teaching strategies, (f) conduct formal and informal classroom observations to ensure that literacy teachers help ELL learners reach their highest potential, (g) engage ELL learners in higher-order thinking lesson activities, (h) to support literacy teachers to help ELL learners increase their proficiency in literacy in order to increase the state scores in literacy, (i) encourage literacy teachers to apply best teaching practices, and (j) use educational programs regarding literacy.

Session 3: K-12 school principals can support literacy teachers with teaching and learning strategies to help ELL learners reach their highest potential. The attendees who will attend the 3-day PD will learn how to support literacy teachers with teaching and learning strategies to help ELL learners reach their highest potential focusing. The 3-day PD content will include information on how principals can support literacy teachers by: (a) considering the cultural and religious norms when choosing reading materials in international language schools, (b) integrating educational language programs into the literacy curriculum, (c) setting high expectations for all ELL learners, (d) using strategies to help ELL learners conceptualize each

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lesson, (e) developing teaching materials for literacy teachers to use cooperative learning as a teaching strategy, (f) encouraging teachers to be facilitators of learning; (g) using small group instruction; (h) using group instruction to meet the needs of ELL learners, (i) including cultural elements in the lessons to celebrate learners' culture, (j) using visual aids in the classroom as a teaching strategy to help ELL learners to visualize difficult concepts, (k) using differentiated instruction, (l) using strategies to help ELL learners to improve the acquisition of literacy, (m) encouraging team planning and collaboration to ensure that teaching strategies are effective to help ELL learners learn English, (n) creating posters, and (o) using visual aids and audio materials.

I will present the 3-day PD to similar international schools located in the Middle East. After the 3-day PD is offered for 3 academic years, a program evaluation will assist K-12 school principals and senior school district administrators in making decisions regarding the support for this kind of extra intensified PD for all K-12 school principals. Materials will be needed for the presentation of the project. PowerPoint Presentation slides, chart paper, markers, and handouts will be requested from senior district administrators responsible for PD. Funding is needed to support the PD sessions, and senior district administrators will be asked for human and capital resources for the PD sessions. My responsibility as a researcher will be to meet with senior district administrators to present the findings of this project study and to ask for permission to schedule and facilitate the 3-day PD sessions.

Further research could be conducted in other settings and with more participants. In Section 4, the project's strengths and limitation, as well as alternative considerations, are presented. Also, in Section 4, I include reflections on scholarship, project development and evaluation, and leadership and change.

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#### Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

In this section, I discuss the project's strengths and limitations. I also write about my reflections and conclusions. Finally, I present recommendations for further research.

##### **Project Strengths and Limitations**

The purpose of the PD sessions is to help both K-12 school principals and senior school district administrators work together to support literacy teachers teaching ELL learners. The attendees of the 3-day PD will be K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East. The content of the PD is designed to help K-12 school principals to gain a deeper understanding of the importance of supporting literacy teachers teaching ELL learners. Senior school district administrators should support K-12 school principals with PD to know how to apply their instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers. Another strength of the 3-day PD designed for K-12 school principals involves the sharing of findings with senior school district administrators to support literacy teachers. Another strength of the project is that both K-12 school principals and senior school district administrators will benefit from the PD content and the meaningful discussions during the 3-day PD sessions. Another strength of the PD is that it includes specific strategies for K-12 school principals to help them to better implement their instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers.

Both K-12 school principals and senior school district administrators need to commit to 3 full days to attend the PD sessions. Although the PD is meaningful and timely, the timeframe for this PD may limit the access of K-12 school principals and senior school district administrators. Thus, the timeframe of the 3-day PD designed for K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East could be a limitation.

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### **Recommendations for Alternative Approaches**

Alternative approaches could include policy recommendations for both K-12 school principals and senior school district administrators in international schools in the Middle East to support literacy teachers teaching ELL learners. PD policy should include ways to support not only literacy teachers teaching ELL learners but also K-12 school principals. Senior school district administrators should allocate resources to support literacy teachers teaching ELL learners. Other alternative approaches could include research-based strategies on how to apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers, mentoring opportunities for K-12 school principals, policies or procedures to support literacy teachers and K-12 school principals for both to focus on how to help ELL learners reach their highest potential, mentoring opportunities for literacy teachers to improve their teaching strategies regarding literacy instruction, and integration of educational technologies into the literacy curriculum.

### **Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change**

During this project study, I learned how to apply knowledge to conduct qualitative research. I learned how to collect data by interviewing participants. I also applied knowledge to analyze interview transcripts for emergent themes. I conducted this qualitative study and collected data from K-12 school principals.

As a scholar, I applied research knowledge. As a novice researcher, I conducted basic qualitative research. I gained valuable insight on how to conduct basic qualitative research. I enjoyed interviewing the participants. I will use this positive experience in my professional role as a research practitioner.

Based on the themes that emerged, conceptual framework, and current research, I developed the content for the 3-day PD sessions. I will present the PD content to K-12 school

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principals. During the presentation of PD content, I will engage attendees in meaningful discussion. I will collect feedback (see Appendix C) from attendees on the last day of the PD sessions. The feedback I collect from the PD evaluations will be shared with senior school district administrators and policymakers at the project site in order to seek ways to improve the content of PD sessions. The feedback which I will collect from PD participants will be used to make any necessary adjustments to PD content. By conducting an outcome-based evaluation, I will measure the potential impact of PD project implementation on both K-12 school principals and literacy teachers. I will also set both short and long-term PD goals for the PD sessions.

I am an educator from the United Kingdom. I have been teaching literacy for 15 years. For the past 8 years, I have been a school principal in an international language school located in the Middle East. I am a novice researcher, and my current role did not have an effect on the data collection because I did not know the participants. I did not have a supervisory role over participants. I established a good working relationship with K-12 school principals during the interviews. I will use this project study to help K-12 school principals to support literacy teachers. I will also share my instructional leadership practices with principals in international schools in the Middle East to make changes to schools.

### **Reflection on Importance of the Work**

I developed the 3-day PD project. Substantial amounts of planning and time were invested in the content of the PD. The time I invested in conducting this qualitative research was beneficial to me as a novice researcher. I truly enjoyed working on this project study. I gained valuable insight in terms of how to conduct basic qualitative studies. I learned from K-12 school principals in international schools in the Middle East about their instructional leadership practices. This doctoral journey has been very rewarding for me.

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### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

I developed a 3-day PD plan for K-12 school principals in order to assist them with new information on how to support literacy teachers. Implications for positive social change include a 3-day PD plan with strategies for K-12 school principals to use to support literacy teachers who are teaching ELL learners for the benefit of students. Implications are that K-12 school principals will benefit from 3-day PD sessions by learning strategies to better implement their instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers. PD hands-on activities will help K-12 school principals to know how to support literacy teachers. The project should be used by school district administrators in international schools in the Middle East for decision-making processes to support literacy teachers. I recommend to K-12 school principals and senior school district administrators to apply the findings of this project study to support literacy teachers who are teaching ELL learners.

Further research could be conducted in other settings and with more participants. Settings of interest could include other locations in the Middle East. I interviewed 15 K-12 school principals within a group of private international language schools located in the Middle East by using an interview protocol. Scholars should interview senior district administrators to identify ways to support K-12 school principals to better implement their instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers. Scholars we wsh to replicate this study should also interview literacy teachers to identify factors influencing their teaching practices.

I recommend that school leaders explore PD opportunities for senior district administrators and literacy teachers to examine how K-12 school principals apply instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers. I also recommend for researchers, school and district leaders, and university leaders to advocate for the support of PD for K-12 school

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principals. Researchers should expand on this project study by using quantitative analysis. Recommendations for future research could include comparisons of other PD programs for school administrators to support literacy teachers.

### **Conclusion**

In this section, the strengths of the findings of this project study were presented. Reflections and conclusions were also presented. The findings of this project study are included in the 3-day PD sessions. Strategies found in this project will provide positive social change by helping K-12 school leaders to better apply their instructional leadership practices to support literacy teachers. The intended target audience for the PD will be K-12 school principals. Senior school district administrators will decide when to offer the 3-day PD sessions.

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### 3 Days of Professional Development Training

By

Ms. Omolola Wright-Odusoga

#### **DAY 1 ELL**

- Learning theories activities
  - ELL theories of learning
  - Applying ELL theories
  - The impact of ELL theories in the classroom
  - Activities for ELL students
  - Statutory requirements
  - School involvement
  - Reading programs
  - School Mission and Vision.
-

### **LEARNING THEORIES ACTIVITIES**

- Link the theories to general learning
- Use the theory to frame your teaching
- Write 2 subjects that relate to the learning theory

### **ELL THEORIES OF LEARNING**

- Find 4 ELL learning theories
-

### **APPLYING ELL THEORIES OF LEARNING**

- Link the learning theories to literacy in Early Year Education
- Highlight differentiated learning instructions

### **THE IMPACT OF ELL THEORIES IN THE CLASSROOM**

- Student engagement
  - Students interest
  - ELL teachers professional disposition
  - School commitment to educating ELL
  - Barriers in applying instructional leadership to support teachers
-

### **ACTIVITIES FOR ELL STUDENTS**

- Games
- Online cognitive activities
- Speaking activities
- Reading activities

### **STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

- Government policies for teaching ELL
  - Educational policies for teaching ELL
  - Considering the cultural and religious when choosing reading programs
  - Materials in international Language schools
  -
-

## **SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT**

- Mentoring and instructional leadership practices when supervising literacy teachers
- Strategies on how to apply instructional leadership practices to support teachers
- Coaching and feedback for ELL teachers

## **READING PROGRAMS**

- Types of programs
  - Age-appropriate
-

## **SCHOOL MISSION AND VISION**

School Mission and Vision and how it relates to ELL

## **DAY 2 STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS TEACHING ELL**

- Reading, writing
  - Lesson plans/ Diverse curriculum
  - Culturally responsive classroom
  - Parents involvement
  - Instructional leadership practices
  - Activity 1: Group work on active learning
  - Activity 2: Table-Talk – What can help a diverse school community thrive.
-



**DAY 2 Continued.....**

- Activity 3: explanation and discussion about equitable instructional leadership practices in a diverse school community
- Activity 4: What makes a K-12 school Principal effective?
- Activity 5: Blended Learning for ELL students and real-life experiences
- Activity 6: Group reflection and recommendations to policymakers to support school leaders in the delivery of ELL curriculum
- Activity 7: Evaluation of activity 5

**READING WRITING**

- How to support literacy teachers
  - How to help ELL learners reach their highest potential through reading
  - How to increase students attainment in literacy assessments and international exams
-

**LESSON PLANS/ DIVERSE CURRICULUM**

- Planning for the use of technology in the curriculum
- Planning for active learning
- Planning for students engagement
- Verbal and non-verbal literacy activities.

**CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM**

- Text rich environment
  - How to use multi-cultural literacy manipulatives to keep students engaged in the classroom
  - Using role-play to increase English fluency
-

## **PARENTS INVOLVEMENT**

- Using surveys to gather other languages spoken at home
- How a statement of internationalism will improve school culture for stakeholders
- Parents participation in class and school activities

## **INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES**

- Encourage literacy teachers to use higher-order questioning skills as a strategy to help ELL
  - Collaborate with literacy teachers on how to help ELL learn English
  - Improve students' learning using effective teaching strategies
  - Conduct formal and informal classroom observations to ensure that literacy teachers help ELL learners reach their highest potential
  - Support literacy teachers to help ELL increase their proficiency in literacy in order to increase state and international exam scores.
  - Encourage literacy teachers to apply the best teaching practices
  - Use educational programs that support the teaching of literacy
-

**ACTIVITY 1: GROUP WORK ON ACTIVE LEARNING**

- Group work on active learning

**ACTIVITY 2**

- Table-talk – what can help a diverse school community thrive
-

**ACTIVITY 3**

- Explanation and discussion about equitable instructional leadership practices in a diverse school community

**ACTIVITY 4**

- What makes a k-12 school principal effective?
-

**ACTIVITY 5**

- Blended learning for ELL students and real-life experiences

**ACTIVITY 6**

- Group reflection and recommendations to policymakers to support school leaders in the delivery of ell curriculum
-

**ACTIVITY 7**

- Evaluation of activity

**DAY 3 LEARNING DATA**

- Data collection
  - When and how to collect ELL learning data
  - Analysing ELL students learning data
  - Using learning data to enrich teaching instructions for ELL
  - Assessment
  - Activity 1: Classroom activities which promote the acquisition of literacy fluency and proficiency
  - Activity 2: Intense projects
  - Activity 3 Table –talk, getting involved in a culturally responsive classroom.
-

**DAY 3 CONTINUED.....**

Activity 4 :

Discussion on school administrators' policy and recommendations to policymakers on how to provide training for ELL teachers

Activity 5 :

Group reflection and recommendations to policymakers on how to support school leaders in a diverse community

Activity 6: Evaluation of activity 4 is it achievable ?

**DATA COLLECTION**

- When and how to collect ELL learning data
-



### **ANALYSING ELL STUDENTS LEARNING DATA**

- Analysing ELL learning data

### **USING LEARNING DATA**

- Enrich learning instructions for ELL
  - Group activity
-

**ASSESSMENT****ASSESSMENT****ACTIVITY 1**

- Classroom activities which promote the acquisition of literacy fluency and proficiency
-

**ACTIVITY 2**

- Intense project

**ACTIVITY 3**

- Table-talk
  - Getting parents involved in a culturally responsive classroom
-

**ACTIVITY 4**

- Discussion, school administrators' policy and recommendations to policymakers on how to provide training for ELL teachers

**ACTIVITY 5**

- Group reflection and recommendations to policymakers on how to support school leaders in a diverse community
-

**ACTIVITY 6**

- Evaluation of activity 4 is it achievable?

**QUESTION AND ANSWERS**

- Questions?
-

## Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview Questions based on the conceptual framework:

Please tell me

1. How do you apply your instructional leadership practices in your school?
  2. Which instructional leadership practices do you apply in your school?
  3. Which instructional leadership practices do you apply to help teachers teaching ELL learners?
  4. How do you help teachers to assist ELL learners in improving proficiency in literacy?
  5. How do you apply instructional leadership practices that support teacher's teaching literacy across content curricula?
  6. Which leadership practices have you applied to improve literacy of ELL learners?
  7. What is your district's intervention strategic literacy plan?
  8. How do you use and implement this strategic literacy plan?
  9. How do ELL learners 'benefit from your leadership as an instructional leader?
  10. What professional opportunities are available for teachers to support literacy in their classrooms?
-

## Appendix C: Professional Development Evaluation

Name of Facilitator(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

Please write your statement to answer the following questions:

1. How do you feel about the overall quality of this professional development?
2. What impact will the content of this professional development have on your work?
3. Recommendations?